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Hijack ordeal ends in southern Spain

ALICANTE, Spain (AFP) — Three hijackers who diverted an Algerian jetliner with 127 passengers and crew to this southern seaside resort Monday gave up and handed themselves over to Spanish authorities, police announced. The Spainish news agency EFE and sources in the transport ministry earlier reported that the hijackers had asked for political asylum, but interior ministry officials would not confirm this. All passengers and crew were freed. Hours earlier, the hijackers had allowed eight women, two men and two children to leave the plane, according to to a spokesman for the local administration. Large numbers of police had surrounded the Boeing 727 airliner, which was grounded at the end of the runway, and local officials began talks with the unidentified hijackers. The plane had been on a domestic flight from Oran in western Algeria to Annaba in the east of the country. Everybody on board the aircraft was Algerian, an interior ministry spokesman said. Algeria's APS news agency said a baby was among the passengers. French and Arab interpreters worked with the local administration to talk to the hijackers.

Yeltsin fires counter-spy

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin fired the head of Russia's Counter-Intelligence Service (FSK), successor to the KGB security police, without explanation on Monday. But the official Itar-Tass news agency and a former senior KGB official suggested the dismissal of Nikolai Golushko was linked to Saturday's release of Mr. Yeltsin's most prominent foes from Moscow's Lefortovo prison, controlled by the FSK. Itar-Tass quoted well-informed sources in the service as saying the release "played no small part" in Mr. Golushko's departure. The leaders of October's armed urprising against Mr. Yeltsin, including former Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi, Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov and five others, were freed from Lefortovo under a parliamentary amnesty despite Mr. Yeltsin's attempts to delay or postpone it. The status of Lefortovo is ambiguous. A spokeswoman for the FSK said it had been transferred from the service to the office of prosecutor-general by a special Yeltsin decree which came into effect on Saturday.

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Fate of peace process hangs in balance

U.S. rejects PLO conditions to resume talks; Israel hints at 'concession'

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The United States Monday sided with Israel by rejecting Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) conditions for resuming peace talks with the Jewish state.

State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said the talks should continue on the same basis as before.

In occupied Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Yitznak Rabin said he would accept an international civilian presence in the occupied Gaza Strip and Jericho in the West Bank.

"We would agree to the deployment of an international presence in the Gaza Strip and Jericho," Mr. Rabin told representatives of American Jewish organisations.

Israel's ambassador at the United Nations also said an international presence in the occupied territories was possible.

Ambassador Gad Yaacobi told Israel Radio this would be possible as long as it was introduced with the agreement of both Israel and the PLO.

"A compromise is being discussed which will say that an international presence is possible, civilian or military, in the territories as long as it is agreed by both sides," he said. He was commenting on PLO demands for international protection for Palestinians following Friday's massacre in a Hebron mosque.

The Israeli government had previously offered only to disarm some extremists among the 120,000 settlers living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip — plans PLO leaders reject as inadequate.

Mr. McCurry, speaking before Ambassador Yaacobi, told reporters that Israel and the PLO should focus on completing the Sept. 13 accord, known as the declaration of principles.

"The agenda is the declaration of principles and how it can be implemented and the full range of issues associated

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Israeli soldiers arrest a Palestinian boy during a demonstration in Arab East Jerusalem on Monday (AFP photo)

Jordan confirms freeze in talks

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan said Monday the Kingdom is joining its Arab partners to the Middle East peace talks in pulling out from a round of bilateral negotiations with Israel in Washington following the Hebron massacre of Palestinian worshippers.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that decision was taken following intensive contacts among the Arab parties participating in the negotiations.

According to senior officials, His Majesty King Hussein and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad decided late Saturday evening to cut short the peace talks in Washington. The decision, which came during a telephone conversation between the two leaders, effectively is one to pull out of the Washington talks three days early.

They say that a decision to "cut short" this round of bilateral talks came also at a coordination meeting of the Arab heads of delegations in Washington late Saturday night.

The heads of Arab delegations have been conducting "consultation" talks with Israeli negotiators in Washington since Feb. 15 and were due to end their talks Wednesday.

Jordanian sources have been careful to term the decision as one of "cutting short" this

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King hosts iftar for security officers

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday hosted an iftar at Basman Palace for senior officers of the Jordanian Armed Forces, the Public Security, the General Intelligence and Civil Defence Departments as well as senior officers of the Palestine Liberation Army contingent in Jordan. Attending the banquet were Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, Prince Talal Ben Mohammad and Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad as well as Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the King's advisers

League: Lebanon blast a diversion

CAIRO (R) — Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Meguid said Monday the bombing of a Lebanese church was intended to shift world attention from the Hebron mosque massacre. "The attack against a Maronite church is aimed at the Lebanese national unity. It is an attempt to divert attention from the Hebron massacre," Dr. Abdul Meguid said in a statement. He sent condolence letters to Lebanese President Elias Hrawi and Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri.

Arafat's effigy set ablaze in Lebanon

BEIRUT (AFP) — Around 3,000 angry pro-Iranian and pro-Syrian demonstrators burned an effigy of Yasser Arafat in a protest march here to mourn Palestinians gunned down in Hebron. Hundreds of Palestinian women marched alongside the demonstrators carrying black flags in mourning for the Palestinians who were killed in a West Bank mosque on Friday by an Israeli settler. They shouted "Death to Arafat" and "Death to Zionists" before burning an effigy of Mr. Arafat

Danish coalition loses majority

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — The centre-left government of Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen lost its wafer-thin one-seat majority Monday when a deputy quit his ruling coalition after being ousted from her own party. But Bente Juncker, dropped by her centre democrats constituency at the weekend, said she would continue to support Mr. Rasmussen and had no plans to vote the government down. "After 20 years of loyal service" she would remain in parliament as "a non-aligned deputy who will not seek to overthrow the government."

Morocco buys Israeli film

PARIS (R) — An Israeli film has been bought by Moroccan television and will be the first movie from Israel to be shown in an Arab country, its distributors said on Monday. The distributors said "Tipat Mazal" (a bit of luck), directed by Moroccan-born Zeev Revach, had been bought by Morocco's second television channel and would be shown in the next few months. "Tipat Mazal" is a comedy about the difficulties encountered by Jewish immigrants from Morocco when they settled in Israel in the 1950s. It has been showing for weeks in Paris to audiences including large numbers of French Jews born in North Africa.

Iranian helicopter returns home

TEHRAN (AFP) — A helicopter which made an emergency landing in northern Iraq has been returned to Iran a week later, the official news agency IRNA reported Monday. It did not say whether the helicopter's two crew members had also come back. An official in the border region of Marivan, in Iran's Kurdistan province, told IRNA that the helicopter had technical problems and was transported back by road on Sunday.

Israeli troops kill 2 and wound 22 in occupied land

HEBRON Occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot dead two Palestinians and wounded at least 22 on Monday in clashes with Palestinians who defied a blanket army curfew that confined two million Palestinians in the occupied territories to their homes.

Palestinians said Israeli soldiers shot dead Abdul Rahim Al Ajlouni, 70, on a Hebron street. Ajlouni's wife was wounded in the leg, hospital officials said.

A few hours earlier, soldiers enforcing a curfew in the northern West Bank village of Askar shot dead 25-year-old lawyer Talal Dweikat during clashes with stone-throwers.

The deaths raised to 21 the known number of Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces in demonstrations that followed the Hebron mosque massacre on Friday, including a bedouin who was shot dead by police in his home village of Rabat in southern Israel.

Palestinians in the occupied territories and their 850,000 Arab brethren inside Israel have been waging street battles with soldiers and police since a Jewish settler killed at least 60 Palestinian worshippers.

Thousands of bedouins took part in the funeral of Mohammad Abu Jame' 22, the first Israeli Arab to die in clashes with the police since 1976.

Hospitals in the Gaza Strip said 11 Palestinians were wounded by army gunfire in the southern area of the strip after hundreds of activists defied army curfews by blocking streets with burning tyres and throwing rocks at soldiers.

Troops shot and wounded eight Arabs in the Nablus area and two more in Hebron, Palestinians said.

Israel, seeking to keep a lid on Palestinian anger over the massacre, widened a curfew it imposed on Friday to cover all of the occupied territories on Monday.

Only Arab East Jerusalem escaped the curfew.

In the West Bank town of Jericho, future headquarters of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat during a five-year period of self-rule, the army used teargas and live bullets to disperse a protest by some 50 women and scores of stone-throwing young men.

Palestinians said four women were overcome by tear-gas thrown inside one of the mosques in the town.

In Nazareth, the largest Arab town in Israel, schoolchildren smashed windows of four Israeli buses.

Palestinians said the army briefly lifted the curfew on the West Bank towns of Ramallah and Al Bireh to allow people to buy food, but quickly reimposed it when young men began attacking soldiers with stones.

In Israel, trouble erupted in Arab towns which until the massacre had been largely peaceful, a measure of the outrage felt around the Arab World.

In Nazareth and Ras Al Amud, near Jerusalem, masked youngsters stoned police, who fired rubber bullets.

Hundreds attacked Israeli banks and businesses in Nazareth, smashing windows. Jewish vehicles were attacked in other towns and police stopped Israeli buses going into Nazareth.

The clashes later spread to the West Bank towns of Kalkilya.

Islamic religious authorities wrote to Israeli Prime Minister

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King to visit S. Arabia this month

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein is expected to perform the Umra pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia and possibly meet with King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz in the second week of March, Jordanian and Arab diplomatic sources said Monday.

It will be King Hussein's first visit to Saudi Arabia since August 1990 when Riyadh-Amman relations were strained as a result of conflicting positions on how to end the Gulf crisis triggered by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The sources said preparations were under way for the King's Umra pilgrimage as well as a possible meeting with King Fahd.

King Hussein is scheduled to begin the pilgrimage around March 10, "but no definite date has been set for King Hussein's meeting with his brother King Fahd," said one of the sources. "We hope the meeting will mark the end of a sour chapter in Arab relations."

Arab diplomatic sources said contacts were under way for the meeting of the two monarchs and the Saudi response was positive.

King Fahd usually meets with visiting heads of state performing Umra, which could be performed any time during the year, or the Haj, which falls at the end of the 'Eid Al Adha, but he had been resisting efforts to arrange such a meeting with King Hussein since 1991; and hence King Hussein did not visit Saudi Arabia or perform either of the pilgrimages since then.

King Fahd has been demanding that a reconciliation could take place only after King Hussein "apologise" for what the Gulf states perceived as Jordan's support for the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

King Hussein has said that he was ready to apologise to King Fahd if he had personally offended him, but that there was nothing to apologise for in the Jordanian stand or the Kingdom's call for a diplomatic solution to the Gulf crisis.

During the crisis, Saudi Arabia reduced the number of Jordanian diplomats in its territory and recalled its ambassador from Amman. He has not been returned since.

The rift appeared to deepen in May 1992 when Saudi Arabia offered funds directly to the U.N. to renovate the Islamic holy shrines in occupied Jerusalem, and Jordan reaffirmed the Hashemite family's role as the guardian of the sites in the Holy City.

A thaw in ties appeared when King Hussein underwent surgery in the U.S. in August 1992 and Prince Bandar Ben Sultan, the Saudi ambassador to Washington, visited him as a personal emissary of the Saudi monarch to wish him well.

Since then the two monarchs have spoken on the phone and exchanged greetings on national and religious occasions.

The latest such exchange came Sunday, when King Hussein sent a message to King Fahd congratulating him on the 12th anniversary of his assumption of powers in Saudi Arabia. The King wished the Saudi monarch good health and happiness and the Saudi people further progress and prosperity, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan appeared to set the ground for a Jordanian-Saudi summit when he welcomed a recent Saudi initiative to raise funds for the renovation of Islamic holy shrines in occupied Jerusalem.

NATO planes shoot down four Bosnian Serb fighters

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) jets shot down four Serb warplanes after they carried out air strikes in central Bosnia on Monday and may have hit a hospital, NATO commander Admiral Jeremy Boorda said.

The West's first military intervention in the 23-month Bosnian civil war was followed by an intense Bosnian Serb heavy artillery attack on the northern Muslim stronghold in Tuzla.

The United Nations suspended aid flights to Sarajevo and convoys across Serb-held territory in case of reprisal by the Serbs.

Adm. Boorda told a news conference at his Naples headquarters that NATO had unconfirmed reports that a hospital and a storage depot were hit in early morning raids by six Yugoslav-built Galeb ground attack aircraft.

Muslim-controlled Sarajevo radio said the targets were residential quarters of the town of Bugojno and a Muslim ammunitions factory at nearby Novi Travnik.

Two U.S.-F-16 flying Falcons downed four planes with heat-seek missiles after NATO pilots "saw the Galebs make a bombing manoeuvre and saw explosion on the ground," Adm. Boorda said. Two other Galebs escaped.

Serb officials denied their planes were in the air, but a Serb source confirmed four Serb aircraft were shot down.

U.N. sources said the Serb planes had attacked a munitions factory in Novi Travnik, a town in central Bosnia held by Bosnia's Muslim-led government. Adm. Boorda said NATO had received unconfirmed reports that bombs hit a storage facility and a hospital.

Adm. Boorda said the U.S. jets broadcast a warning for the six Serb planes to land or exit Bosnian air space immediately or be engaged. He said no response was heard and the American pilots then witnessed the Serb planes make what appeared to be bombing runs. The Serb planes did not return fire when the U.S. aircraft attacked, Adm. Boorda said.

The incident occurred over Banja Luka, a northwestern city that is a Bosnian Serb stronghold.

In Washington, U.S. President Bill Clinton said "every attempt was made" to avoid shooting down the Bosnian Serb planes.

Mr. Clinton said helicopters have violated the NATO "no-fly" zone in the past, but there have been no fixed-wing violation by fighter planes since September.

"Those are much more serious because the capacity they have to engage in military conduct from the air," he said.

British Prime Minister John Major, who was in Washington ahead of a meeting with Mr. Clinton in Pittsburgh later in the day, endorsed the action, saying the "no-fly" zone "was plainly infringed."

The United Nations cancelled relief flights into Sarajevo and most land convoys in Bosnia had bene cancelled, apparently for fear of attack.

U.N. officials also reported the Serbs opened fire on the northern town of Tuzla several hours later. That could be in retaliation for the NATO action, or designed to prevent NATO and the United Nations from further pressing the Serbs.

Lebanese blast victims laid to rest

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanon came to a standstill Monday as grieving relatives held a mass funeral in the church where nine worshippers were killed in a bomb blast.

Monsignor Nasrallah Sfeir, the head of the influential Maronite community, who led the service for six of the victims at our Lady of Deliverance Church north of Beirut, said: "All the Lebanese have the right to a life of dignity away from fear."

Mr. Sfeir called on the government to live up to its responsibilities, in remarks widely seen as an indirect way of accusing the government of bias against Christians.

President Elias Hrawi, who attended the funeral service, pledged to "cut off the hands of those who seek to sabotage peace in Lebanon."

"We will resist all attempts to sow terror," he said, adding that the presence of Christians in Lebanon would not be undermined.

More than 600 people packed the church. Hundreds more stood in the courtyard, in the parking lot, on the street and on a highway overpass.

Four white coffins and a brown one were lined up side by side in the church, where pools of blood, stained-glass debris and broken pews were cleaned up overnight. But blood stains could still be seen on the ceiling.

The portrait of a non-commissioned army officer, who was blown to pieces in Sunday's blast, was held up by his relatives. The other victims, including a four-year-old girl, were taken to their home villages for burial.

Fifty-five other people were wounded in the blast and a second bomb was defused, averting a massacre.

Christians and Muslims — were united in grief, observing a shutdown across the country to mourn the victims.

Banks, schools, businesses and most shops closed in response to President Hrawi's call for a national day of mourning.

Traffic was light in Christian and Muslim districts alike and the shutdown included Israel's occupation zone in South Lebanon.

Lebanon's 50 television and 120 radio stations suspended normal programmes and broadcast classical music and news bulletins.

Only bakeries, pharmacies, hospitals and Beirut airport were exempted from the shutdown.

The bombing, which drew

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Relatives grieve over the coffin of one of the nine killed in Sunday's bomb explosion at a church 20 kilometres north of Beirut (AFP photo)

King donates JD 100,000 for blast victims

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein Monday announced that he was donating JD 100,000 to the families of those who were killed or wounded in the bombing of the Maronite church in Lebanon. On Friday, His Majesty donated JD 100,000 to the families of those who were killed in the massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.

Israeli measures focus on Kach group

TEL AVIV (AP) — Kach, the group founded by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, is the focus of a crackdown on Jewish extremists after the massacre by a group member in a Hebron mosque.

Opposing any compromise with Palestinians and seeking their expulsion from Israel, Kach is the core of a network of possibly overlapping factions whose overall membership is unknown but generally estimated at a few hundred.

Kach "has several hundred active members and the support of maybe a few hundred more," said Ehud Sprinzak, a political science professor at Hebrew University and an expert on Israeli extremists.

The group's members have served in the army and carry submachine guns. In November, Avraham Toledano, a Jerusalem rabbi known to have links to Kach, was caught at Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion airport trying to smuggle in gun parts, bomb-making manuals, telescopes and silencers from the United States.

"These people have been constantly harassing the Palestinians, even before the massacre," Mr. Sprinzak said. "The question is why they were allowed to turn the area into a wild west."

Newspaper commentaries Sunday were virtually unanimous in condemning past inaction against the extremists, and some argued the foreign-born zealots present in large numbers in extremist groups should never have been allowed into Israel.

"The raw material is American, the money is American and the joke is on us," wrote Nahum Barnea in the Hebrew daily Yedioth Aharonoth.

Brooklyn-born Baruch Goldstein, who carried out Friday's massacre, "would have been stopped at the border in a normal country, here he... even served in the army."

Immigration Minister Yair Tsaban, told the Associated Press the government was considering action "to prevent such people — who even now are preparing to arrive from brooklyn — from coming."

The government also ordered the detention of five extremists and the disarming of extremist settlers, and Housing Minister Benjamin Ben Eliezer said Kach would be outlawed in coming weeks.

Sunday's moves were the harshest against Jewish extremists since the arrests ten years ago of 27 members of a "Jewish underground" charged with a series of attacks, including the 1983 killing of three Arabs at Islamic college in Hebron.

Although several members of that group received life sentences, all have since been freed.

Efforts to reach Kach activists for comment were unsuccessful as their office and home phones went unanswered Sunday.

Kach spokesman Noam Federman, who was reported to have fled his home for fear of arrest, telephoned Israel Radio Sunday from an unknown location and told an interviewer: "I'm not hiding. I'm touring Israel."

Kahane founded Kach after emigrating from the United States in the 1970s and in 1984 won a seat in parliament. Goldstein represented Kach on the local council of his Kiryat Arba settlement.

The party has since been excluded from national elections through a law forbidding racist platforms.

Kahane was assassinated in New York in 1990 — but his legacy lives on.

Kach is now led by former Kahane aide Baruch Marzel.

Mr. Sprinzak said "a possibly more radical group" is the splinter faction Kahane Chai (Kahane lives), with several dozen members led by Kahane's son Benjamin.

On Friday, Kahane Chai issued a statement mourning Goldstein as "a true Jewish hero" who died "sanctifying the name of God."

The radical group's activists are a frequent sight at anti-government rallies and scuffles with left-wing demonstrators.

Afghan Kunduz province Hekmatyar forces seize

ISLAMABAD (Agencies) — Afghan Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's forces have seized control of key military positions in the country's northern Kunduz province, a spokesman for Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami forces said Monday.

Qaribur Rehman Saeed, speaking by telephone from the Pakistani city of Peshawar, said the attack was launched overnight by forces of the four-party alliance opposing Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

He said they captured Kunduz airport, the main garrison and an ancient fort in the city, which is about 150 kilometres north of the capital Kabul, near the border with Tajikistan.

No independent confirmation of the claim was available.

Mr. Saeed said the attack was led by commander Jumma Khan of Hezb-e-Islami, a key component of the anti-Rabbani alliance, which also includes the faction of former communist General Abdul Rashid Dostum.

The offensive was in retaliation for the seizure 10 days ago of some vital Hezb-e-Islami positions by forces of Mr. Rabbani and his ally, Rasul Sayyaf of Ittihad-e-Islami, he said.

Kunduz had been in control of Mr. Rabbani and Sayyaf forces since the Mujahedeen victory in April 1992, which came after 14 years of war against the communists in Afghanistan, the spokesman said.

Gen. Dostum, northern Afghanistan's most powerful warlord, has denied charges he is receiving help from Uzbekistan in the civil war tearing his country apart.

Gen. Dostum also said his army would not stop its two month-old fight until Mr. Rabbani resigns.

Gen. Dostum, receiving two foreign journalists in his medieval-style fortress in Mazar-e-Sharif, said he had good relations with the former Soviet republics of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan but denied receiving military assistance from them.

"The bases that we now control were used to supply the whole of Afghanistan during the (Soviet-Afghan) war. We do not need further supplies from Uzbekistan," Gen. Dostum said.

"We have good relations with the governments of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, but no foreign government is making an impression on our policies."

Gen. Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek and top military commander in the Soviet-installed government of former Afghan President Najibullah, made Mazar-e-Sharif his stronghold following the Soviet Red Army's withdrawal in 1989.

Algeria militant group suffers blow

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Algerian authorities have dealt a major blow to extremists by killing one of their most radical leaders, Djaafar Al Afghani, and nine of his followers, security officials says.

Afghani was head of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which claimed responsibility for kidnapping three French consular officials last October, and subsequently threatening to kill any foreigners who did not leave the country.

The 29-year-old militant leader and his followers were killed Saturday as they were holding a meeting in a house on the outskirts of Algiers, the security officials said.

They said the fundamentalist leader, who adopted a nom de guerre but whose real name was Mourad Si Ahmad, and his men were shot down after they opened fire on police officers who had surrounded the house.

The deaths came amid fresh unrest here in the last two weeks. Various schools, government buildings and public places have also been set on fire.

Last Wednesday security forces killed another fundamentalist leader, Toufik Hattab, who was charged with taking part in the assassination of former Premier Kaski Merbah and the former head of Algerian television, Mustapha Abada.

Eight civilians were killed by fundamentalist militants between Thursday and Saturday in various incidents across the country, security services said.

They added that 16 fundamentalists had been killed in the same period, as well as the GIA members killed Saturday.

Afghani had been sentenced to death by a special court set up to try suspected fundamentalists accused of terrorism and subversion. His nom de guerre comes from his years of training in guerrilla warfare in Afghanistan.

His group has rejected any dialogue with the government, which in recent months has sought to end the cycle of violence that began after the army intervened in January 1992 to scrap the second round of general elections the now-outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

The GIA has threatened to kill anyone who negotiates with the government, and to prove its power and influence recently said it had killed 70 members of a rival group, the Armed Islamic Movement.

Last October, the GIA also claimed responsibility for the kidnapping of three French consular employees who were later released, one of them bearing a message warning all foreigners to leave the country by November 30.

Since last September, 28 foreigners, including six French nationals, have been killed in Algeria by suspected fundamentalists. Hundreds of Algerians have also been targeted by the extremists.

The announcement of the killing of Afghani came a day after President Liamine Zeroual appealed for national harmony, chairing his first meeting of the Algerian cabinet following his investiture on Jan. 31.

In a speech on Saturday he said he was opposed any "use of violence to achieve power... attaining national harmony between Algerians must be the first axis of our power."

In Paris, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said he was "extraordinarily concerned" about the latest upsurge of violence in Algeria, and called for dialogue between the government and the FIS.

Speaking on French television, he called for dialogue with "all factions and political groupings who leave their Kalashnikovs at home, including the FIS which renounces violence."

"It seems today that this talks process has begun. Unfortunately, the violence shows no signs of decreasing, and that is why I remain extraordinarily concerned by the situation in Algeria," he said.

The GIA, last November rejected "all dialogue, any truce and any reconciliation," with the government, and threatened 'the worst of deaths' to those who entered a dialogue with authorities.

The military forced out President Chadli Ben Jedid, cancelled legislative elections which the FIS was winning heavily, and installed an army-backed collective presidency that banned the front and arrested dozens of its members.

Defence minister Zeroual was named president at the beginning of the month. While a hardliner against the insurgents, his government is believed to be maintaining discreet contacts with disbanded FIS leaders, two of whom were released from jail last Tuesday.

The GIA is believed responsible for some 30 attacks on various targets since last September. It stands for the establishment of an Islamic government in Algeria, but is a bitter rival of the FIS, whose leaders have been threatened with death.

The group is a splinter of the rival Armed Islamic Movement of Abdul Kader Chebouti, a close associate of the FIS.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israelis oppose disarming settlers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Three out of four Israelis believe settlers should be allowed to carry guns, according to an opinion poll published Monday, a day after the government voted to disarm dangerous extremists. Only 23 per cent supported disarming the 115,000 Jewish settlers living alongside two million Palestinians who are not allowed firearms, the survey for the Yediot Aharanot newspaper found. An overwhelming 76 per cent were against and one per cent voiced no opinion. Half of the 502 Israelis questioned on Sunday thought the 500 settlers living in the old Jewish quarter of Hebron should be left there, despite the fierce opposition of the Arab population and the slaughter of 60 Muslims by a settler in a Hebron mosque on Friday. But 46 per cent said Jews should be evacuated from the flashpoint while four per cent expressed no view. And 66 per cent said the extremist, anti-Arab Kach movement should be outlawed, while 32 per cent were against and two per cent without opinion. The mosque killer spent years in Kach movement, many of whose militants supported the massacre.

U.S. troops shoot Somali gunman

MOGADISHU (R) — U.S. soldiers shot and wounded a Somali gunman close to the capital Mogadishu's main airfield on Sunday, a U.S. military spokesman reported. Colonel Steve Rausch said six Somalis jumped out of a pick-up truck at 10:20 a.m. local (0720 GMT) and opened fire on a sentry position. The guards fired two shots back, hitting one Somali in the chest. According to Colonel Rausch, a second Somali was shot by one of his colleagues. The uninjured gunmen drove off. A second pick-up collected the two casualties. Most U.S. troops have been redeployed to the airport in preparation for their departure from Somalia by March 31. There have been sporadic shooting incidents around the airport compound this month.

S. Korea plans military sale to Egypt

SEOUL (AP) — South Korea plans to sell Egypt ammunition and other military materials for the first time, Defence Ministry officials said Monday. In a letter in January, Egypt said it intended to buy artillery and other weapons as well but South Korea would sell only ammunition and other "non-combatant" materials, they said. The officials declined to disclose other details, including the amount of sales. The officials, requesting anonymity, said South Korea hopes the expected deal with Egypt will help expand its military sales in other Middle East countries. Egypt has formal diplomatic relations with South Korea but not with North Korea. Seoul and Cairo have consulates in each other's countries.

Bahrain, Qatar in war of words

BAHRAIN (AP) — Bahrain and Qatar were locked in a war of words Sunday, the eve of an International Court of Justice hearing on a territorial dispute between the two Gulf neighbours. Bahrain's Foreign Ministry, in a statement distributed by the official Gulf news agency, expressed "regret" over new Qatari assertion of sovereignty over the disputed island of Huwar, and the reefs of Fasht Al Dibal and Jaradah. It said the three disputed sides are "under Bahrain sovereignty and an indivisible part of its territory." The statement was issued in response to a remark by a Qatari official earlier in the day that Huwar, Fasht Al Dibal and Jaradah belonged to Qatar. The International court of Justice was to convene in the Hague Monday. The session, expected to last till March 11, will decide whether the court has jurisdiction to look into the dispute, after Qatar filed a suit against Bahrain. Bahrain will be represented at the hearing by Minister of State for Legal Affairs Hussein Al Baharna, and Qatar by Najib Bin Mohammad Al Nuaimi, a legal adviser to the Qatari rulers. The islands had been controlled by Bahrain under a border demarcation accord before the two countries gained independence from Britain in the early 1970s. The dispute flared in 1986 when Qatar landed troops on the disputed reef and seized foreign workers building a coast guard station for Bahrain. They were released 17 days later following Saudi mediation.

Israel to bring in 2,700 Thai workers

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli government on Sunday agreed to bring in 2,700 Thais to replace Palestinian farm workers, officials said. The government took the decision under pressure from Israeli farmers who complained they were unable to employ Palestinians after the occupied territories were sealed Sunday. Violence erupted after a Jewish settler shot dead at least 60 Palestinians worshippers at a mosque in the West Bank town of Hebron on Friday. Several hundred Thai workers are employed by Israeli farmers, particularly in the Jordan Valley in the West Bank.

Kuwait women seen winning vote soon

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's top woman civil servant believes women will one day win the vote and the right to stand for parliament despite opposition from the all-male assembly. "I believe as an indefatigable optimist the day will come soon when Kuwaiti men will welcome their sisters in joining them at the polling stations and invite them to take their rightful seats in parliament," said Rasha Al Sabah, under-secretary of the Higher Education Ministry. "The indicators are encouraging and if there is one thing I am certain of, it is this one cannot swim against the current of time." Mls Sabah, a member of the emirate's ruling family, made the remarks in a Feb. 12 speech at a symposium on Arab affairs in Washington, newspapers published the text. Women activists had hopes of winning the vote after the 1991 Gulf war liberation because of the prominent role women played in the civilian resistance to Iraqi occupation. During the 1990-91 occupation the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, said he would consider giving Kuwaiti women the right to vote, although he added the issue required time.

Struggling to rebuild, Lebanese grope for new identity

By Ed Blanche
The Associated Press

BEIRUT — On a bluff above the highway that runs north through the Christian heartland, past boutiques and perfumeries, stands a huge white stone statue of Christ, arms outstretched towards the sea.

On the southern outskirts near the airport, in teeming Cement-block slums inhabited by poor Shiite Muslims, three-Metre-high cutouts of the black-robed clerics they revere are tied to lampposts whose lights don't work.

These symbols epitomise deep cultural and economic divisions that still haunt Lebanon three years after the long civil war.

As they struggle to rise from ruins largely of their own making, Lebanon's four million people have enjoyed their longest period without serious sectarian violence since the 15-year war began in 1975, mainly because of Syria's undisputed control of a country it has long coveted.

But the peace is fragile. On Sunday, a bomb ripped through a packed Maronite Catholic church north of Beirut, killing nine worshippers and wounding at least 60 as they lined up in front of the altar to take communion.

Fighting also continues in southern Lebanon, where the Israelis occupy a border strip.

Lebanon's fortunes have always been prey to the vicissitudes of volatile Middle East politics, so the progress of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations is a crucial factor in its future.

The one million Maronite Catholics who traditionally dominated the country's politics, military and judiciary have lost much of their power. Many are leaving Lebanon and most of those who fled the war have not returned.

"They fear the future because they see no guarantees of their security," said Jean Ghanem, a Maronite member of parliament.

"They fear the way the Muslim population is multiplying all the time and they fear it will one day overwhelm them. They fear Syria. But they have to change their way of thinking or go under."

Lebanese Shiites, long downtrodden, accumulated power with Iran's support during the civil war and are the largest sect, with 1.2 million people.

But both communities are torn by internal power struggles.

The Maronites, their clan patriarchs dead or in exile, are leaderless and politically impotent after boycotting the 1992 parliamentary election, the first in 20 years, to protest the presence of 40,000 Syrian soldiers.

Hizbollah, the fundamentalist Shiite group that wants an Islamic republic in Lebanon, is at odds with the government and the Syrian-backed Shiite movement Amal led by Nabih Berri, the speaker of parliament.

"The Maronite era has passed," said Sheikh Naeem Kassem, Hizbollah's deputy secretary-general. "They have to reconcile themselves to what's happening or they will keep decreasing.

"They have to stop thinking of Lebanon as only being for them. Until they do, we can't live with them in mutual respect."

Nabil Mikati, a Sunni Muslim psychiatrist, said: "Many, many people are still psychologically scarred. They cling to the old tribal allegiances because of the uncertainty."

Nonetheless, "the sectarian barriers are breaking down slowly," he added. "We're seeing a new tolerance. People are looking for a new identity."

That may be so, but there also is growing discontent — particularly among the 800,000 people displaced by the war — over the slow pace of visible recovery under Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Mr. Hariri, a Sunni Muslim billionaire, has assembled one of the strongest financial teams in the Arab World and has made significant strides towards rebuilding, but the results may not become evident for at least a year.

Whatever the criticism, Mr. Hariri, 49, is still seen as the only politician who can prevent Lebanon from plunging back into the abyss.

He has an ambitious $13 billion reconstruction plan whose centre piece is rebuilding devastated downtown Beirut over the next six years. the $1.85 billion project is scheduled to start in a few weeks.

"It will be the locomotive that will get the train rolling again," Fouad Sinioura, the finance minister, said in his ministry office amid the ruins.

Interior Minister Bishara Merhej said, "Our key problem is the economy. We're under enormous pressure. We need help, but we're not getting it."

Mr. Hariri's efforts received a significant boost in January when a sale of shares to raise $600 million for Solidere, the company he created to handle downtown reconstruction, was oversubscribed by 50 per cent.

Inflation is running at an annual rate of more than 100 per cent, however, and unemployment is 20 per cent. The 350,000-member Confederation of Trade Unions, which organised protests that brought down the government of Omar Karami in May 1992, is demanding pay increases of 120 per cent pay hikes.

In December, Mr. Hariri averted a general strike by raising the minimum monthly wage 40 per cent to the equivalent of just under $120 a month, barely enough to get by.

Power and water supplies remain sporadic. Only half of Lebanon's 400,000 telephone lines function and none of the six sewage plants work. Foreign firms have contracts to restore services, but it will take time.

Beirut's potholed streets are overhung with thick tangles of makeshift power lines, most of them illegal, that lace together like endless vines in a giant cat's cradle. The clatter of generators makes the ground throb.

Housing is desperately scarce. About 87,000 buildings were destroyed or damaged during the war, 69,000 of them in Beirut and environs.

New buildings are poking up, but many are luxury blocks whose apartments sell for $1 million to rich Saudis and Kuwaitis. Few Lebanese can afford them.

About 500,000 refugees live in the homes of people who fled or squat in the shattered, rat-infested remains of downtown buildings.

Reinforced concrete floors are folded upon one another like huge venetian blinds. Poignant human touches, wike flowers in rusting tin cans perched on the makeshift balconies, heighten the mind-numbing gloom of the place.

But there is a harbinger of rebirth in the Bois des Pins, a wood planted in central Beirut in the 17th century by the Ottoman Emir Fakreedin: the pines, stripped by shellfire, are beginning to sprout new shoots.

Lebanese soldiers, representing the return of central authority after years of anarchy, man armoured cars at key intersections, frequently backing up police dragnets for drug traffickers and car thieves.

But violence still flares up. And the gulf between haves and have-nots, which helped ignite the civil war, is a potential catalyst for further strife.

"If this situation goes on, the forces of extremism will be stimulated," a senior official said, on condition his name not be used. "Unless we can improve our situation, they will flourish.

"Poor people are targets for the extremists. They're very vulnerable."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 ..... Rensignement Generau
19:00 ..... News in French
19:15 Le Monde Fantastiques Des Animaux
19:30 ..... News in Hebrew
20:00 ..... News in Arabic
21:30 ..... The Respected Family
22:00 ..... News in English
22:20 ..... The Cape Rebel
23:50 ..... Night Court

PRAYER TIMES

04:34 ..... Fajr
06:00 ..... (Sunrise) Duha
11:48 ..... Dhuhr
15:03 ..... 'Asr
17:35 ..... Maghreb
18:52 ..... 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh. Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church. Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasancta Church Tel: 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 630851. Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazarene Tel.675691.
The Evangelical Local Church In Amman Tel. 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

There will be a gradual rise in temperatures with clouds appearing at different altitudes and winds becoming northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

	Min./Max. temp.
Amman	5 / 13
Aqaba	11 / 22
Deserts	5 / 17
Jordan Valley	12 / 22

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 20. Humidity readings: Amman 73 per cent, Aqaba 50 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Nidal Al Dahleh 727195
Dr. Bassam Karadsheh 759201
Dr. Yahya Abdul Salam 736072
Dr. Yousef Al Faqih 756988
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636731
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairouih pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Hilu 279773
Alquds pharmacy ..... (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halasch 982799
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896300
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority ... 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseiin Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity. J. Amn ... 644281/6
Akileh Maternity. J. Amn ... 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas. J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic. Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli. Abdali 664164/6
Italian. Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir. J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army. Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital .. (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital ..... (09)998990

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital ..... (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital ..... (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:10 .... Jakarta. Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:35 ..... Damascus (RJ)
07:45 ..... Dhahran (RJ)
09:10 ..... Muscat. Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:25 ..... Aqaba (RJ)
09:50 ..... Karachi. Dubai (RJ)
10:20 ..... Doha. Bahrain (RJ)
16:35 ..... London (RJ)
16:50 ..... Frankfurt (RJ)
16:55 ..... Cairo (RJ)
17:30 ..... Chicago. Amsterdam (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 ..... Vienna (OS)
16:45 ..... Rome (AZ)
18:05 ..... Paris. Beirut (AF)
19:45 ..... Beirut (ME)
20:00 ..... Aden (IY)
00:30 ..... Bucharest (RO)
01:15 ... Amsterdam. Damascus (KL)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 ..... Aqaba (RJ)
08:30 .... Amsterdam. New York (RJ)
11:00 ..... Vienna. Frankfurt (RJ)
11:15 ..... Montreal. Toronto (RJ)
11:35 ..... Paris. Brussels (RJ)
11:45 ..... Geneva. Madrid (RJ)
12:05 ..... London (RJ)
12:45 ..... Cairo (RJ)
20:00 ..... Larnaca (RJ)
20:30 ..... Jeddah (RJ)
21:30 ..... Abu Dhabi. Dubai (RJ)
22:00 ..... Colombo. Singapore (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:50 ..... Vienna (OS)
17:45 ..... Dubai (AZ)
21:00 ..... Aden (IY)
01:30 ..... Bucharest (RO)
02:15 ..... Amsterdam (KL)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman ..... 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus ..... 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus ..... 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman ..... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	550 / 650
Banana	680
Banana (Mukammar)	620
Cabbage	70 / 40
Carrot	200/150
Cauliflower	200/ 100
Clementine	260 / 200
Cucumbers (large)	140 / 80
Cucumbers (small)	250 / 200
Eggplant	250 / 90
Garlic	1000/900
Grape Fruit	200/150
Green beans	1000/ 700
Lemon	150 / 80
Marrow (large)	150 / 80
Marrow (small)	320 / 220
Olives (green)	700/500
Orange	470/ 120
Onion (dry)	350 / 300
Onion (green)	240 / 160
Pea	900/500
Pepper (hot)	440 / 340
Pepper (sweet)	440 / 340
Potato	240/ 180
Radish	150/ 100
Tomato	210/ 130
Spinach	150 / 80
String beans	1100/ 700

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CLASS
DATE

Jordan to observe anniversary of Arabisation of armed forces

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Tuesday observes the anniversary of the Arabisation of the Jordanian Armed Forces upon orders from His Majesty King Hussein.

It was on the first of March 1956 when the King ordered the termination of the services of General John B. Glubb as chief of staff of the armed forces and said that Jordanian officers should take up the command of the Kingdom's military.

The move was significant in view of the Arab-Israeli conflict at the time and the dangers that Israel's occupation of Palestine posed to the Arab nation.

It also came as a manifestation of Jordan's desire to rid itself of foreign domination.

A source of pride to the Kingdom, the anniversary reflects King Hussein's wisdom, courageous leadership and great love for his country, people and army.

Since 1956 the King has continually worked towards strengthening the armed forces and has made all efforts to ensure that they are provided with the most up-to-date weapons required to defend the homeland.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Mirai Al Kaabneh sent a congratulatory cable to the King on the eve of the anniversary saying, "Your Arabisation of the Jordanian Armed Forces served as an honourable stand in Arab modern history and a highlight in the course of the Great Arab Renaissance which was triggered by the Sherif of Mecca earlier this century.

He said that the Arabisation came in response to the aspirations of the Arab people.

Gen. Kaabneh pledged the armed forces allegiance to the Hashemite Throne and determination to shoulder their responsibilities in defence of the nation.

Public Security Department (PSD) Director Abdul Rahman Al Udwan also sent a cable to the King congratulating him on the anniversary. Lt. Gen. Udwan said "Your Majesty's historic decision in 1956 marked the beginning of an Arab national awakening and opened door of freedom for our people and confidence in the future."

He said that the Arabisation of the Jordanian Armed Forces constituted a nucleus for pan-Arab struggle and was in line with the principles of the Great Arab Revolt.

German tourist sustains minor injuries from knifing

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A German man was stabbed in the back early Sunday in downtown Amman by a woman who was enraged by the massacre of more than 69 Palestinians in her West Bank hometown of Hebron, a police report said.

The attack took place when Klaus Eichen, 23, his wife and son were visiting the Roman amphitheatre in the busy Hashemiyeh Square area.

According to the report, Mr. Eichen and his family arrived in Jordan on Saturday.

Mr. Eichen told police he was leaving the amphitheatre when a woman attacked him with a knife.

The woman, a 27-year-old who was identified only as N.N.K., stabbed Mr. Eichen in the back, then she tried to attack his wife. Bystanders intervened to restrain the attacker who was arrested by police.

In her testimony N.N.K. said she attacked the tourists to avenge the victims of the Hebron massacre.

The stabbing attack is the second such incident reported in the two days following the terrorist assault in Hebron.

After the announcement of the massacre on Friday, an angry Hebron native stabbed a 77-year-old British tourist, Howard Long, in the same area. A medical report had said that Mr. Long's injuries were not serious.

A hospital official at King Hussein Medical Centre, where Mr. Eichen was being treated, told the Jordan Times that the young German man suffered minor injuries in the back, and that he was released from hospital the same day.

The official said the Eichen family, who were on a two-day stopover in Jordan, left the Kingdom that same evening for India to continue their tour.

Details were unavailable on the background of the assailant.

Ingrid Liedgens, the head of the press and cultural section at the German embassy in Amman, told the Jordan Times that the attack was an unfortunate incident, but luckily it was not fatal.

She said the embassy has warned all German tourists and citizens residing in Jordan to take extra precautions and to avoid going to the downtown Amman area until the situation has calmed down.

"As long as there are no new reported incidents in the Kingdom, everything will be normal," Ms. Liedgens said.

Several Western embassies had earlier advised their nationals to exercise caution while moving about or visiting places in the next few days.

This attack comes one day following His Majesty King Hussein's call for calm among the public.

JMA ready to send more doctors to treat Hebron massacre victims

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Medical Association (JMA), which has been in daily contact with the JMA office in Arab Jerusalem since the attack last Friday on the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron that killed nearly 70 Palestinians, is prepared to send more doctors to the West Bank as soon as it receives notification from the Jerusalem office, according to JMA President Ishaq Maraqa.

"The Jerusalem office notified us this morning that it faces acute shortages of medicine and medical equipment to treat the wounded, but we realised that it would take two weeks to send these requirements to the occupied West Bank," Dr. Maraqa said Monday in a statement.

"We therefore contacted the office of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Amman urging them to supply the Jerusalem office with its needs as soon as possible," Dr. Maraqa added.

He said the JMA is waiting for permission to send over medicines and equipment through the Ministry of Health and pharmacies in Amman.

Dr. Maraqa noted that a Jordanian medical mission grouping specialists from the JMA and the Health Ministry went to the West Bank Sunday to help treat the wounded.

Meanwhile, Chief Justice Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi Monday said in a statement that a large number of Jordanian citizens have made donations to the victims of the massacre through the higher committee entrusted with supervising the fund raising efforts.

Sheikh Tamimi urged the public to donate more and to deposit contributions at the six Jordanian banks which opened special accounts for the collection.

He said the committee has already requested that the Council of Ministers approve a tax exemption for any amount contributed to the cause.

Economist criticises PLO for excluding experts from talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — A prominent Palestinian economist has criticised the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and its leadership for what he described as lack of coordination with Palestinian experts in the negotiating process with Israel.

Dr. Yousef Sayegh said in a lecture he delivered at the Centre for Strategic Studies of the University of Jordan Sunday that the Sept. 13 PLO-Israel agreement in its current form does not mean the establishment of peace, but rather it constitutes an attempt to reach a political settlement of the Palestinian problem.

He said the PLO was involved in secret negotiations with the Israelis in Oslo without having the approval of all Palestinian institutions.

"Now there is no unanimous approval or consultations with the Palestinian institutions and the Palestinians on the issues under discussion in the negotiations ... (PLO Chairman) Yasser Arafat used the carrot and the stick technique in the game to get to where he is now," Dr. Sayegh said.

The participants in the negotiations included only representatives of the PLO mainstream faction Fateh, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) (Yasser Abed Rabbo's wing) and Al Shaab (the people's) Party, while experts and technocrats were not present at the negotiation table in Oslo he said.

The four negotiators in Oslo were without legal, economic or any other advisors, and they even asked for legal advice from the Israeli and Egyptian counsellors in the negotiations, he said.

"They have done it secretly without even our knowledge as Palestinians participating with them in the negotiations. Not even the Palestinian delegation in Washington knew about it, nor did the other Arab parties to the peace talks."

Dr. Sayegh said the Palestinian delegation in Oslo did not even have well-studied files, but had aspirations and general foggy ideas, as if the goal was to pass it from underneath the table. "Now we can see that every detail needs weeks for reaching an agreement (by the Palestinians and Israelis) and during this period the Palestinians offer more compromises."

The declaration of principles, he said, lacks many principles — political and economic principles. For instance it did not mention "withdrawal" or "occupation," he said.

Dr. Sayegh said that the agreement even fails to point to the Palestinians' right to economic self-determination or their other rights such as the right to return, their right to Jerusalem and to control the economic and environmental resources, and there is no clear interpretation of these rights because of the absence of a conspicuous declaration of principles.

He criticised the agreement also for partitioning the self-rule period in issues such as education, culture, social development, direct taxes and tourism.

Dr. Sayegh concluded by saying that the Palestinians have to practice their role in a responsible manner at the present time, particularly as they now have their independence from other Arab countries.

AL Al Bayt, churches call for removal of settlements, justice

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research (AL Al Bayt Foundation) Monday issued a statement deploring the massacre committed by an Israeli settler against worshippers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron last Friday and urged the world community to help put an end to Israeli atrocities in the occupied Arab lands.

The crime in Hebron was the latest in a series of massacres and outrageous actions committed against the holy shrines over the last four decades, said the statement.

These violations included numerous acts of desecration at Christian and Islamic shrines in the holyland, it said.

AL Al Bayt Foundation set three demands to be met in order to see justice applied in the occupied Arab lands. They are: the protection of Arab citizens under Israeli rule; the removal of the Jewish settlements on the occupied Arab lands; and firm steps by the United Nations and all peace-loving nations towards the implementation of U.N. resolutions designed to end the occupation and ensure the return of the lands to their lawful owners.

The statement said that Israel should be made to succumb to international principles and legality and should, like all others, be made to comply with U.N. resolutions so that justice can be served.

Churches issue statement

Heads of nine Christian communities in the Israeli-occupied Palestinian lands have expressed solidarity with the Muslim community and condemned the massacre of Muslim worshippers in Hebron.

"The blood of the 69 Palestinians shot dead in cold blood Friday by an American Jew and settler on Palestinian land is still crying," said a statement issued by the community leaders.

"Some of the contributing factors to this ongoing miserable crisis (the Palestinian-Israeli conflict) are the settlements and the armed (Jewish) settlers which must be removed instantly," stressed the statement.

It said no grants or loans must continue to be forwarded freely for their expansion in the Arab land.

The heads of the communities included the Roman Catholic, the Greek Orthodox, the Armenian Orthodox, the Episcopal, the Greek Catholic, the Coptic Orthodox, the Ethiopian, the Chaldean Catholic and the Lutheran churches.

Abu Nidal group wants Jordan to ease pressure

AMMAN (R) — The extremist Abu Nidal Palestinian group denied plotting against Jordan and Monday appealed for His Majesty King Hussein to resist Western pressure to suppress it.

"We appeal to His Majesty King Hussein and the Jordanian administration of the need to look at the facts and truths and the dangers of responding to pressures coming from the West," Hussein Ben Ali, spokesman of Abu Nidal's Fateh Revolutionary Council (FRC), said in a statement sent to Reuters.

Jordanian police last week arrested about 25 members of Abu Nidal's Fateh Revolutionary Council on suspicion of masterminding the assassination of Nayeb Maaytah, a Jordanian diplomat in Beirut, last month.

The FRC, which has denied involvement in the killing of the first secretary at the Jordanian Embassy in Lebanon, said "tens" of cadres were arrested in raids begun on February 17.

RSS, UNESCO to set up renewable energy centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — An agreement for scientific cooperation was recently signed between the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Paris, stipulating that RSS and UNESCO will work together to establish a regional renewable energy centre in Tal Hassan, in the eastern Badia of Jordan.

An RSS press release Monday said that the proposed centre's main functions include promoting scientific applied research, education and training of renewable energy issues and problems of neighbouring countries as well as creating and developing a regional renewable energy network to enhance the exchange of information among experts including the provision of technical advisory services.

The centre will organise regional training courses, scientific conferences, workshops, study tours, and lecture activities through a programme of technology transfer.

Development fund to grant more loans

AMMAN (Petra) — The board of directors of the Development and Employment Fund (DEF) Monday endorsed the fund's 1994 budget of JD 10 million and said that more loans would be offered directly to heads of needy families to help them carry out income-generating projects.

The board reviewed the fund's activities during 1993 and the various allocations of loans to different governorates and discussed plans for the coming three years.

In a statement later, DEF Director General Mohammad Semadi said that last year the fund offered loans to 1,400 unemployment needy people totalling JD 7.5 million.

Acryllic on plywood by Jalal Ariqat

The curious distinction of Jalal Ariqat's art

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Ab'aad Art Gallery in Amman is featuring an exhibit of abstract paintings by artist Jalal Ariqat which have a curious distinction.

The works are a series of patterns done in acryllic brush strokes in diverse shades, colours and textures which have been blended into a multi-hued background.

In and of themselves, the patterns are neither particularly serene nor disturbing at the same time.

But the artist has chosen to take each pallette and set it inside a grid of severe, straight black lines which essentially dissect the pallees in a mechanical way.

These patterns are like nature itself, Mr. Ariqat told the Jordan Times. When we observe nature and admire the composition and beauty of a particular setting or object, "we look at it on the surface — we never carefully observe the individual units that make up the whole and observe their own unique details."

He said that one of his aims in slicing up the patterns with these black, mechanical grids was to lure the observer "to go deeper and dive under the surface, to observe each individual section or area of the pattern and see how it relates to the whole."

His aim is thus to show the aesthetic principle found in nature that every unit of a whole is an entire entity within itself, with its own inherent and unique nature.

Mr. Ariqat said that "ever since I was very young, I always loved to draw — I would draw everything around me, including my classmates," and thus he had felt compelled to be an artist. "I can't go by for one day without drawing or painting something."

He said that his first love in art was the abstract.

"Some people come and say: 'What is abstract art? It has nothing to do with nature or natural beauty.'"

"I say no. Abstract art involves taking the principles of beauty which we see all around us in nature, stripping them and showing them in their purest form."

Mr. Ariqat graduated from the Institute of Fine Arts in Jordan in 1975. In addition to his painting he has worked as an interior designer and an illustrator of educational books for children.

The exhibit will continue at the Ab'aad Art Gallery until March 12.

RJ launches 2 additional direct flights to New York

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Royal Jordanian (RJ) — the national carrier, has introduced two more direct weekly flights to New York to accommodate passengers who would like to have early connections from New York to other destinations in the U.S., RJ officials said Monday.

The officials said the two flights, one on Tuesday and the other on Friday, depart Amman at 8:30 a.m. and arrive in New York early evening.

"Passengers from Amman have a better choice of connecting flights from New York during the early evening hours and the new RJ flights intend to serve them," said a senior RJ official.

The airline's three other weekly flights to New York will continue to leave Amman at 11:30 a.m., on Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays, arriving in the late evening, the official said.

"Most of those who travel on these flights have to spend overnight in New York before catching a connecting flight," noted the official.

With the two additional flights, RJ now flies to New York five times a week, all of them with one stopover in Europe.

In addition, the airline also flies to Chicago twice a week.

The RJ official said the carrier did not have any immediate plans to introduce new routes or flights this year.

"We would like to use this year to consolidate our routes and services and increase revenue," said the official.

An RJ and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) delegation is expected to visit India soon for talks with Indian authorities on the possibility of operating a direct flight from Amman to Bombay, the Indian commercial capital.

Now the airline flies to New Delhi and Calcutta, two other airports in India. But Bombay, where Indian business is concentrated, is one of the more attractive destinations for RJ.

The Indian minister of tourism and aviation who visited Amman last month agreed in principle to grant RJ landing rights in Bombay, but a firm agreement has to be worked out after financial and technical details.

Even if an agreement is reached during the delegation's visit to India in March, it would not be before 1995 that actual Amman-Bombay flights could start.

The airline has a good number of lucrative routes and it has been registering good operational profits after a period of slackness during the late 1980s.

Amman serves as a transit point for travellers from Europe and the U.S. to the Far East, including Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia.

But a heavy debt burden is weighing down the airline. Debt servicing not only wipes out RJ's operational profits, but also pushes the carrier into the red.

A British consultancy firm is currently conducting a feasibility study to come up with the best mechanism for privatising the airline. The study is expected to be completed in March.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ☆ Plastic exhibition by several artists at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Exhibition of Jordanian products at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Exhibition of works of art by the Arab Centre for Vocational Training.
- ☆ Exhibition of paintings by Riham Ghassib at The Gallery Inter.Continental Hotel.
- ☆ Art exhibition by artist Jalal Ariqat at Ab'ad Art Gallery (10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. except Fridays).
- ☆ Art exhibition by several artists at the Alia Art Gallery (8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.).
- ☆ Exhibition of medical herbs at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre (7:00 p.m.-midnight).
- ☆ Art exhibition by Jordanian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre (7:00 p.m.-midnight).
- ☆ Wood carving exhibition by artist Samer Ousama at the French Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Art and photo exhibition by several Arab artists at the Balqa Art Gallery in Fuheis (Tel. 720902).
- ☆ "Permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman (Tel. 643251/2).
- ☆ Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Justifiability in halting words

SATURDAY'S DECISION by Jordan, Syria and Lebanon to suspend peace talks with Israel, in reaction to Friday's massacre of Palestinian worshippers at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, had to be expected. The trauma and anguish caused by the pogrom have made it *extremely difficult for the Arab side to continue* the negotiations on business-as-usual basis. A halt to the Washington talks was inevitable.

His Majesty King Hussein told members of Parliament Saturday that a decision to withdraw from the negotiations was not up to Jordan alone, but rather a collective Arab position that needed to be carefully taken. Now that a solemn decision has been taken, the PLO too can be expected to stick to its demands for protection of Palestinians under occupation before talks can be resumed in any manner or form.

Judging by the deliberations of the U.N. Security Council on a draft resolution on the Hebron massacre, the likelihood of an agreement among the permanent members for the establishment of an international regime for the protection of Palestinians looks dim. With the council's inability to move effectively in that direction due to opposition from Washington and London in particular, the chances of the PLO accepting without any question U.S. President Bill Clinton's invitation to both sides to take part in a continuous session in Washington till a breakthrough is attained look also bleak.

France's alternative proposal to place international observers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to monitor the situation there may offer a middle ground that could be acceptable to both sides. Such an initiative could be a nucleus for greater international role in the occupied territories and deserves careful consideration. If accepted, the idea could be a modest beginning of a process that may prove unstoppable.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has yet to address the French proposal and most probably he would reject it. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, on the other hand, saw some merits in it and did not rule it out of hand.

The worthiness of the French idea lies in the* fact that the other permanent members of the Security Council could find it workable under *the circumstances. Besides, the Arab side is not* exactly in a mood, politically or emotionally, to resume peace efforts as if nothing had happened. *Something meaningful has to be* adopted therefore as an effective antidote to the massacre before Arab-Israeli negotiations can *be put on track again.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in **Al Dustour** daily Monday accused the Israelis of being behind the explosion in a church in Lebanon which killed nine people and wounded scores of others. Mohammad Kawash said that the Israelis aimed at sowing the seeds of dissension among the Lebanese in a bid to divert the Arab people's attention away from the massacre they committed in Hebron and to minimise the Arab masses' wrath against *the Jewish state and Jewish settlers. The writer said the* Israelis, who perpetrated the explosion in the church, sought to involve the media in other questions so that the Arab and the world public opinions would forget about the Hebron massacre. There is no doubt that by planting the explosives in the church Israel also wanted the Lebanese people to become embroiled in another internal conflict, added the writer. He said that the crime committed by the settler in the Hebron area was clearly motivated and planned by the Israeli military establishment which does not wish to see the ongoing peace negotiations ended with part of Palestine given back to its owners. The writer said that one can only conclude that Israel is committing these crimes in order to undermine the whole peace process.

SALAMEH EKOUR, *a columnist in* **Sawt Al Shaab** *daily* Monday criticised Parliament for demanding that Jordan pull out from the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, saying that this move would increase the burden on the Kingdom and would bring about further headaches for its leadership. The writer said that while Parliament is demanding a pullout from the peace process, the Israelis and the Palestinians are going ahead with plans to respond to President Clinton's invitation to go to Washington soon and resume their negotiations. The writer said that the Palestinians did not consult with Jordan, Syria and Lebanon and decided to go to Washington for a resumption *of negotiations. The PLO, which is supposed to be* demanding the liberation of Palestinians and the Palestinian lands, including Hebron where the massacre occured, is not showing any protest and would not pull out its delegation from the peace negotiations, said the writer.

The View from Fourth Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

The politics of pique, theatre or maturity?

The almost simultaneous juxtaposition earlier this week of the tragedy of the Hebron mosque pogrom and His Majesty King Hussein's fascinating meeting with members of the Lower House of Parliament highlights a central fact about the contemporary Arab political order that desperately needs highlighting: the need for the public sector and the political decision-making system in general to achieve higher standards of relevance and excellence.

I found it quite extraordinary — and heartening — that King Hussein himself should have had to call in the parliamentarians and politely shake them up, cajoling them into doing their job properly. Jordan is fortunate to have a top leadership that finds it appropriate and necessary every once in a while to call in the executive and legislative branches of government and prod them to do a better job. This is a form of political accountability that is peculiar to our patriarchal Middle Eastern cultures, and it is highly revealing of the state of our political culture, for two reasons.

First, it shows us that the real driving forces of our political transformation do not necessarily emanate from the comfortable political establishment represented by the executive and legislative branches, but rather from the top and bottom of the political spectrum — the Royal Family leadership and the sentiments of ordinary people and grassroots institutions.

Second, it shows that the quality of public sector decision-making is less than desired or required for healthy nation-building and sustained development.

The fact that King Hussein — personally and before a national television audience — should have to remind parliamentarians about the urgency of tackling issues such as environmental pollution and the new problem of drug addiction is about as severe a rap on the political knuckles as one can give in public in our culture. It is no accident that the King asked the parliamentarians to spend more time dealing with important public issues and less time on personal differences at a moment when grassroots attitudes to Parliament are becoming more vocal and sceptical.

It has become increasingly clear in the last month that Parliament as a whole, as well as some individual members, may be suffering declining credibility. This is not new, or peculiar to this Parliament. The public has been unsure of Parliament's performance for several years. Public opinion polls showed that the previous Parliament's MPs were widely seen by the public as having focused their attention on personal aggrandisement (getting Cabinet posts) or on serving the personal needs of their friends, cousins and constituents. Not surprisingly, nearly three-quarters of the previous MPs were not reelected, or chose not to run again. This can be seen either as a triumph of the people's will, or a catastrophic display of political immaturity, amateurism and dilettantism. Take your choice.

The new Parliament is rather different from the previous one in its make-up and tone. Nevertheless, the display of personal pique by some members of this Parliament and government — whether directed against other MPs, press folks like ourselves, or constituencies throughout the country — reveals a combination of emotional and political over-*sensitivity that is deeply engrained in our culture*, but that is not always conducive to effective debate and decision-making in a pluralistic, parliamentary, and democratic political system.

Some of the behaviour we have seen in Parliament is high drama and gripping political theatre. It is at once entertaining, captivating and indicative of the real political struggle under way in our culture between the forces of the new and the old. But is it good governance? You decide.

Whatever you may think of the government and the Parliament, they accurately reflect where we stand today as a political culture in transformation. We have much to be proud of, including the fact that we are engaged in such a transformation. But we also have much to be worried about, and King Hussein showed his usual combination of honesty and courage in saying so in public in his talk with the MPs the other day.

Another important point that King Hussein made was about the logistics of parliamentary sessions and the Cabinet's work, specifically suggesting that the entire Cabinet did not have to attend every session of Parliament. This is a crucial point that should be further developed by the political power structure, so that our executive/parliamentary decision-making system can make real qualitative gains, improve its efficiency and relevance and face up to the enormous challenges that Jordan and the rest of the region will confront in years to come.

I would suggest, in fact, that one reason we continue almost helplessly to suffer ignominious humiliations such as the pogrom at the Hebron mosque is that decision-making systems and political structures in the Arab World have not allowed us to tap the full potential of our people, culture and resources. I would even argue that the restricted nature of decision-making in the Arab World since the start of the Arab-Israeli conflict earlier this century, combined with the dependent, obedient and largely passive political role that Arab individuals have been forced to play, have been important causes of our weakness and Israel's strength.

It is illusory at best for us to believe that we can satisfactorily confront our economic, political, social and environmental challenges in the years to come with a part-time Parliament that meets for a few hours on a few days during a few months of the year, with the entire Cabinet in tow. This system may *have been satisfactory in the middle of the 20th century, but it* urgently needs to be updated to deal with the realities of the end of this century.

Few other political cultures in the Middle East are as fortunate as we are to have the combination of accountability that we have witnessed in Jordan this week — simultaneous public pressure from the top and bottom of the political system for better governance. The political establishment will have to respond to this unprecedented double challenge by making real changes in the mechanics and the manner of its political conduct. I have no doubt that our political power structure is *capable of rising to the challenge before it; we have a good* track record of decency in the people who run our government and Parliament, and in the values that define our culture.

Increasing numbers of Jordanians are suffering from economic and environmental stresses that are aggravated by intense population pressures and continuing political and economic constraints from the wider Middle East region. Parliament and the executive branch of government cannot deal with these momentous challenges with a business-as-usual attitude, whether vis-a-vis domestic or regional issues.

Yet, Parliament and the government alone cannot bear full responsibility for the challenges ahead. A wide range of individuals and institutions throughout society also have to rise to the challenge of political transformation, especially the education system, the press, the private sector and grassroots social and cultural societies. It is easy to criticise the government for its shortcomings. It is far more difficult for the country as a whole to work with the government to bring about the required changes.

In many ways, King Hussein's remarks to the Lower House of Parliament and to the public at large earlier this week were as significant as the political liberalisation and democratisation process that the King initiated in 1989. The changes we have instituted in our political system in the last several years are a good start, but they remain insufficient and incomplete in the face of the magnitude of our needs and aspirations. Will the political establishment and the public at large recognise this fact and deal with it in a mature and rational manner, or will we simply endure another round of collective political pique, leading to fresh cycles of chronic ignominy and suffering?

Our modern developmental history and the values of our culture suggest that we can rise to this challenge as we have risen to others in the past. In the coming few years, we will find out if this is true, or if it is mere romanticism masquerading as false political self-confidence.

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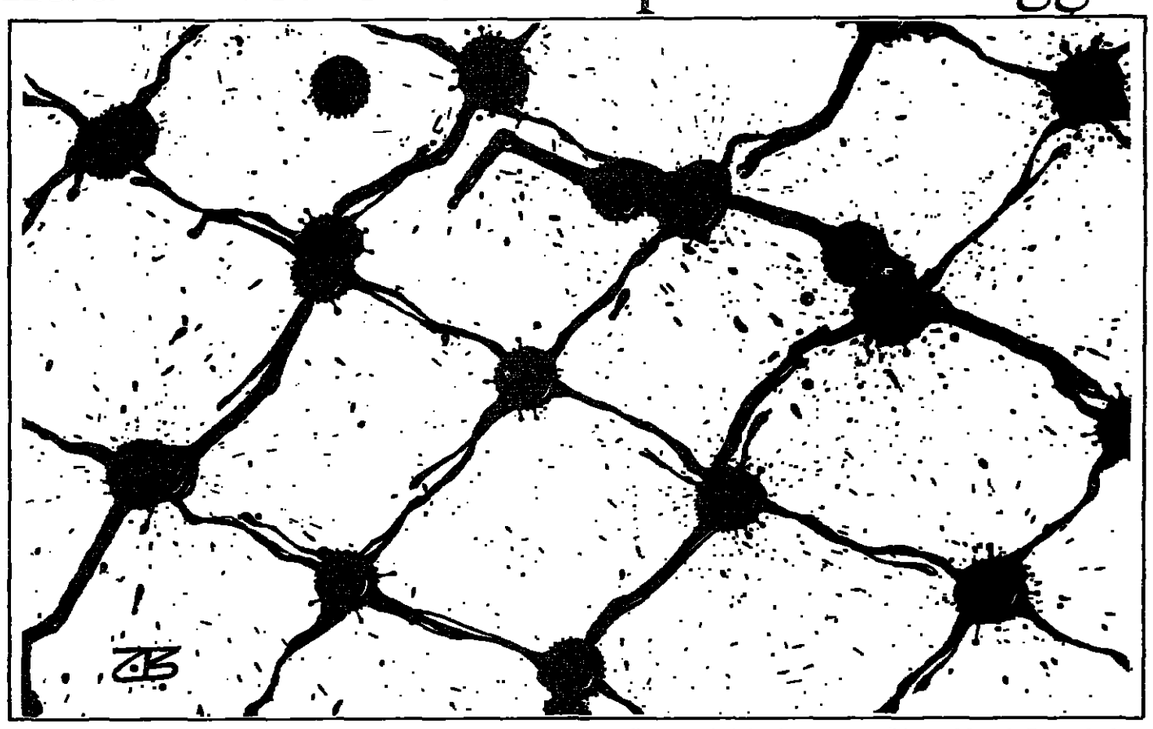
Jihad — violence or spiritual struggle?

By Robert W. Bermudes



THE WORLD Trade Centre bombing has given a new lease of life to the myth that armies of "bearded zealots" are vying with each other to get first crack at destroying prime New York City and other American real estate. Radio and television have overflowed with warnings against "Islamic terrorists" and wild talk of legislators making lurid, racist pronouncements about closing our borders against floods of predatory immigrants.

Fifty years of the Cold War have made demonising the "*other*" as *natural as eating* and sleeping. Much of today's hysteria about "Islamic fundamentalists" goes hand *in glove with other racist* portrayals of Arabs as "stealthy", "untrustworthy," "lazy" and "violent". People feed on our media's mindlessness. Hopefuls for public office tap into these caricatures of Arabs, assuring voters that only additional police on the beat, more jails or the death penalty will turn back the "Islamic plague".

In the West, the common use of the inaccurate term "Islamic fundamentalism" is equated with the kind of violence recently witnessed in the World Trade Centre bombing. Invariably such violence is portrayed in the media as part of the Muslims' "holy war", their "jihad" to spread their faith. This blanket condemnation of jihad is both incorrect and destructive. In fact, to be even moderately well informed, Westerners must distinguish between three major Islamic interpretations of jihad, each of which is militant in one way or another.

"Holy war (jihad) is a divine institution of warfare to extend Islam into the abode of struggle or to defend Islam from danger," according to the Concise Encyclopedia of Islam. Another interpreta*tion focuses on the Arabic* derivation of jihad, which means "to the strive", in the sense that all Muslims are *obliged to wage a spiritual* jihad against sinful inclinations within themselves. This view is supported by a prominent Muslim activist, Sayid Qutb. The third major view of jihad is reflective of the kind of violent activism prominent in Egypt, Algeria and Sudan. One of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's assassins, Abdul Salam Farag, is a vocal proponent of this view of jihad.

Mr. Farag claims that violent activism is the "true" jihad, a position he bases on portions of The Holy Kuran. But Mr. Farag completely disregards the context behind the verses of scripture he cites. He stresses that those who follow the true jihad, i.e. violence, "must consciously formulate the inner intention of fighting for God's cause". The command in Sura 9, Verse 5 of The Kuran, "to be at peace with infidels", he *claims was abrogated by a* later scripture reference.

He writes that "fighting is a 'duty upon all Muslims", *which means confrontation* and bloodshed. The scripture passages Mr. Farag uses support his view of jihad only if they are read apart from the historical context, and only if they are partially quoted. In fact the verses he cites are addressed to the community of believers who were forced into exile from Mecca to Medina the 6th century. The call to war is meant in that context. Hence, when Muslims are exiled or persecuted, they cannot stand idly by, they should fight even if they dislike fighting. But citing scripture verses out of context, as Mr. Farag does, misinterprets The Kuran.

However, Sayid Qutb, one of the founders of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt who is widely read in the Muslim world, begins his argument about jihad by clarifying that Islam does not call its followers to force others to believe. He quotes a verse in Kuran that says "Let there be no compulsion in religion; truth stands out clear from error." As a "*world idea*", Sheikh Qutb implores Islam to aid in eradicating all injustice, regardless of a people's country, religion or skin colour.

"Human beings are meant to be salvaged from destruction," writes. "It is only in this context that Muslims should rise to jihad in the same way, Christians who believe America should active rise in support of the Bosnian Muslims share Sheikh Qutb's understanding of jihad.

Differing interpretation of The Kuran

Here, then, are two starkly different understandings of the Kuran although the Western world prefers to lump Sheikh Qutb and Mr. Farag together as "Islamic fundamentalists". Our inability and unwillingness to understand the difference between them lies at the heart of our nation's racist attitudes toward Arab peoples: the inability to distinguish in faith of Islam's followers from the individual divergences that every religion is subject to.

In the book Humanism in Islam, Marcel Boisard describes jihad through the eyes of a noted Muslim jurist, distinguishing four types wars waged by the heart, the tongue, the hand and the sword. He sees the war of the heart as the internal spiritual and moral struggle which should lead to victory over evil inclinations. This is the most important and meritorious of all jihads. He views the wars of the tongue and hand as one's efforts to calmly set edifying moral examples for non-Muslims; it commits the believer to correct errors and enforce good conduct. His war of the sword corresponds to armed conflict with the enemies of Islam and with foreign leaders who persecute Muslims or restrict their freedom of conscience. But Boisard sums up, with the words of the Prophet *Mohammad himself, that the* most important war is the war of the heart: "The Prophet, returning from a military expedition against some enemies, declared that 'we are returning from a small holy war to the great holy war.'"

Jihad is not a dirty word, yet it has become the phenomenon of our time. Violent and non-violent Muslim activists are the victims of centuries-old misperceptions. Islam and its followers continue to be stereotyped. And so, the growing gulf between East and West, exacerbated by the *media's misleading* use of the terms "Islamic fundamentalism" and "jihad", the violence committed by a *fraction of Muslim activists* have played a large role in the creation and maintenance of our present contentious *attitudes. Our constant* differentiation between "them" and "us", "evil" versus "good", "civilised" versus "uncivilised", "friend" versus "enemy" only whips up paranoid fervour and intolerance both in the West and within the closed circles of violent Muslim activists.

If only we were able to differentiate between the types of Muslim activists, we could know who the actors are and what the current violent ones abhor: poverty, human rights violations and a long-standing sense of injustice meted out by the current political systems in the Middle East.

The call of jihad has become for many people, in the U.S. in particular, a political weapon to justify curtailing Americans' freedom of travel, or a larger slice of our taxes to maintain "interdiction forces" standing by around the world. Merely voicing the words "jihad or *Islamic fundamentalism*" generates ill-will or a false impression about Islam and the majority of its followers.

Americans should have less concern about "terrorist cells" and "violent religion" and greater motivation to en*gage in an international spiritual* and moral struggle against closed minds.

The Rev. Dr. Robert W. Bermudes is a retired United Church of Christ Minister. The article is reprinted from the Middle East International.

Ministers back Balladur in media row

With the Gaullist-led government on the defensive over *accusations of manoeuvres to* control the media, cabinet ministers were mobilised last week to deny high-level involvement in the ousting of André Rousselet, a friend of President François Mitterrand, as chairman of the independent television station Canal Plus.

Mr. Rousselet said that the *prime minister*, Edouard Balladur, was behind a putsch at the network, whose satirical Spitting Image style programme Les Guignols de L'Info has shown the prime minister as a *smug ultra-conservative. Since* Mr. Rousselet's reluctant departure, the satirical programme has increased its mockery of Mr. Balladur.

Mr. Rousselet's allegations were supported by one of the station's chief shareholders, Marc Vienot, of the Société Générale bank, who said he believed there had been government interference.

Mr. Balladur said he had learnt of the change when he read the morning papers. But the Socialist Party said government control of the private *television network, which has* more than 4 million subscribers, was part of a prime ministerial strategy to bring all audio-visual media into line in the run-up to the presidential elections next year.

Members of Mr. Balladur's Gaullist RPR said that Mr. Rousselet's dismissal was a business decision. The interior minister, Charles Pasqua, said Mr. Rousselet, who was forced to resign after an unexpected alliance by institutional shareholders at a board meeting, was *suffering from megalomania* and owed his position mainly to President Mitterrand's influence.

The former chairman, whose personal fortune is based on a Paris taxi firm, had been re*placed by a professional* broadcaster, Pierre Lescure.

The communications minister, Alain Carignon, reacted strongly to an article by Mr. Rousselet in Le Monde, headlined: "Edouard killed me."

Denying that Mr. Balladur had played a part in the former chairman's downfall, Mr. Carignon also rejected the allegation that Les Guignols de L'Info would be taken off the air.

The programme, which is shown uncoded at peak viewing time, has emphasised the rivalry between RPR leaders, portraying Jacques Chirac, the party chairman, as irascible and incompetent, and Mr. Balladur as arrogant and patronising.

Mr. Rousselet's dismissal followed other changes in media management, including the appointment of a Balladur nominee, Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, to head the two state television networks, replacing another of the president's friends, Herve Bourges.

The most popular channel, the independent TF1, already has a reputation for pro-government bias.

The Guardian

هكذا من الأصل

Yemeni leaders authorise committee to halt fighting

SANAA (Agencies) — Yemen's leaders on Sunday gave a military team full authority to halt fighting between rival armed forces units and allow the country to step back from the danger of civil war, political sources said.

The authorisation was signed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his estranged deputy Ali Salem Al Beidh in Sanaa and Aden respectively, Sanaa Radio said. The team was due to start work Monday.

This was the first joint action by the two leaders since their quarrel several months ago plunged the country into its worst political, military and economic crisis since the former North and South Yemen merged in 1990.

"This is the first good news in a week of military clashes giving people hope their country is distancing itself from the brinkmanship of civil war," a political source said.

The radio said the document was put forward by Jordan, which hosted the signing of a reconciliation pact between the two leaders in Amman last Sunday.

Within hours of the reconciliation, clashes flared between northern and southern forces mainly in the southern province of Abyan. Each side accused the other of pushing for all-out war.

The joint military committee includes Defence Minister Haitham Qassem Taher of Mr. Al Beidh's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), Chief of Staff Abdul Malek Al Seyani of Mr. Saleh's General Peoples Congress (GPC), members of a joint Jordanian-Omani team and the U.S. and French military attaches in Sanaa.

The radio said it had "comprehensive and full authorisation with immediate effect" to prevent clashes.

A southern military spokesman said a fighting had spread from Abyan to the Saada area to the north of the capital Sanaa in which 12 southern soldiers were killed and 30 were wounded and warned of a danger of civil war engulfing the country.

But a northern military spokesman said: "The report was a fabrication and lies by YSP secessionist powers... seeking to draft the country into a civil war."

One GPC source said: "Nobody was killed or injured (in Saada). It was a minor incident between the commander and his men," he did not elaborate.

The committee is mandated to secure the redeployment of troops away from the former border areas as well as the integration of the two armed forces, still divided.

A spokesman for the committee said it decided at meetings in Sanaa and Aden that units which left their positions during the recent clashes should return to their bases. Sanaa Television said the committee had decided to remove unauthorised checkpoints and ban troop movements it had not authorised.

The spokesman said the committee "has the backing and support of its decisions from the country's higher political leadership and will start its work on Monday."

Gas project affected

The rivalry between authorities in North and South Yemen has complicated the race between the U.S. firm Enron and a U.S.-South Korean consortium to win a $5 billion liquified natural gas contract, the Cyprus-based Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported Monday.

The weekly review said Prime Minister Haidar Abu Bakr Al Attas, Oil Minister Salem Ben Hussainun and Trade Minister Abdul Rahman Bafadhil, all southerners, opted to negotiate with Enron, which later announced it had a "tentative agreement to develop the project."

However, Hunt Oil insisted that its proposal to build an export terminal on the Red Sea in Northern Yemen with U.S. partner Enron and the South Koreana firm Yukong was still on the table.

Enron proposed transporting gas via a pipeline from the Marib and Jawf fields in the north to Ras Omran in the south, where it would build an export terminal and liquefaction plant on the Gulf of Aden, MEES said.

Yemen's proven gas reserves are estimated at around 450 billion cubic metres in the Marib-Jawf concessions.

The country's daily output exceeds 57 million cubic metres.

Fate of peace talks hangs in balance

(Continued from page 1)

with the declaration.

"That has been the agenda and will likely remain the agenda and must remain the agenda for them to move ahead in the process," Mr. McCurry said.

The PLO, its negotiations with Israel suspended, meanwhile pressed for foreign intervention and concessions from the Jewish state to ensure that the massacre could never happen again.

Friday's bloodbath — at least 60 worshippers gunned down by a Jewish settler in Hebron's Cave of the Patriarchs — clapped the brakes on Arab-Israeli negotiations and ignited four days of protests which have killed 20 more Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and one in Israel itself.

PLO spokesman Yasser Abed Rabbo said after a leadership meeting in Tunis that the PLO would not resume negotiations while Jewish settlers "hold their guns to Palestinian heads" in the occupied territories.

Mr. Rabin, speaking in parliament, told Palestinians: "We understand your feelings and hurt along with you over the terrible tragedy."

He urged the PLO to stick to September's historic peace agreement and return to talks, which have failed for 2½ months to settle details for Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

He agreed to place international observers in occupied territory but rejected PLO demands to dismantle Jewish settlements.

Other minister showed signs of flexibility.

Addressing Israel's parliament, the Knesset, Mr. Rabin told the Palestinians: "We can see the finish line. Another effort, some more goodwill by you, the Palestinians, and by us, and we will win .... there is no other way.

"We invite you to return to the negotiating table... because after the blood, the tears, perhaps the near future bears what we wanted and dreamed of so much: to put an end to 100 years of war and terror and to begin living like all other peoples."

But he declared that Israel will make no compromises on its security to meet Palestinian demands for removing the 144 Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and further action against right-wing extremists.

"I must make clear to our Palestinian negotiating partners, this terrible murder in Hebron and the sentiments of mourning and sadness won't move us from our positions in principle which touch on the security of Israel and its citizens, including Jewish settlers.

"We have no intention of compromising, not even on a single security matter which touches each and every one of us."

Mr. Rabin assured the Knesset: "We will continue the peacemaking. We will expedite the talks, the contacts and the negotiations, and even if it takes time, peace will come."

Mr. Rabin later told visiting American Jewish leaders he would agree to an "international presence," in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, saying this was mentioned in the Sept. 13 peace accord. But Mr. Rabin stressed he would not agree to stationing foreign troops, his spokesman Gad Ben-Ari said.

There was no immediate Arab response to Mr. Rabin's speech, delivered the day after his coalition government ordered a limited crackdown on Jewish extremists and the release of up to 1,000 Palestinian prisoners in an effort to assuage the PLO and salvage the peace process.

Up to 30 settlers were ordered disarmed and 15 were banned from the occupied territories. Five were ordered detained without trial for three months. At least one has been arrested.

But PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat Sunday rejected those moves as "hollow and superficial" and demanded tougher action against right-wing extremists.

PLO envoys were sent to Washington and Moscow to press the Palestinians' case for removing the 120,000 settlers in the occupied zones, officials reported in Tunis.

Lebanon blast victims buried

(Continued from page 1)

worldwide condemnation, caused apprehension among the various Lebanese communities who expressed fears it would hamper the country's drive for recovery from the 1975-90 civil war.

"We thought we were on the road to recovery," said Ziad Baalbaki, an owner of a bakery in Beirut. "But recent incidents and especially the horrific church bombing came to prove that the decision to keep Lebanon unstable remains."

Sami Bazzi, a banker, said: "It is outrageous to target innocent people as they pray... it did not happen even during the worst days of the war. It can only mean that it is not time yet for our wounds to heal."

Information Minister Michel Samaha told reporters after a four-hour emergency cabinet meeting on Sunday night: "There crime aims at weakening confidence in the security situation and economic and social stability in Lebanon nad evoking sectarian feud."

It was the deadliest attack in Lebanon since a car-bomb killed 17 people in west Beirut in December 1991 and came barely 48 hours after an Israeli settler killed more than 30 Palestinians as they prayed in a Hebron mosque in the occupied West Bank.

Political leaders, bankers, businessmen, economists and newspapers on both sides of the religious divide speculated almost unanimously that Israel was behind the blast.

They said it was in Israel's interest to divert world attention from the Hebron massacre.

"Only 48 hours divided the two crimes. Many observers see the second as a cover for the first," said the left-wing Beirut newspaper Al Safir.

No such attacks on Muslims or Christians at worship occurred during Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

But the bombing of the Maronite church may have been designed to make it look as though Muslims, who received worldwide sympathy as victims of the Hebron massacre, were themselves capable of similar atrocities, political analysts said.

Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri, a Sunni Muslim, blamed Israel immediately after the blast.

Israel holds ill-timed economy forum

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel, under the cloud of the Hebron massacre, opened on Monday an ill-timed international conference on post-peace economic prospects in the Middle East.

A senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) economic official invited by Israeli organisers did not show up.

Foreign executive hoping to cash in on peace, heard Foreign Minister Shimon Peres make a business pitch prefaced by references to 'crazy people' out to dash hopes of Arab-Israeli coexistence.

Mr. Peres, addressing the government-sponsored business conference, focused his remarks on creating a common market, or free trade zone in the Middle East.

His call for cooperation in the region coincided with the suspension of Arab-Israeli peace talks over the massacre on Friday by a Jewish settler of at least 60 Palestinian worshippers in a Hebron mosque.

"We shall not permit a small group of crazy people to kill our future, to kill our morale, to kill our prospects or to kill a single person who is innocent," Mr. Peres said before getting down to business.

"On the Arab side there is a great deal of fears. They say, 'don't go with the Israelis, they will dominate our economy, they will run our lives'...nothing is further from the truth than these unfortunate (misconceptions) about the common market in the Middle East," he said.

"We cannot dominate the Arabs and we don't want to. We didn't give up territorial domination in order to replace it with economic domination."

A common market, Mr. Peres said, would require building new roads and rail links in the area to change a transport infrastructure built along strategic rather than economic lines.

Water was also a key in a region that is 89 per cent desert, he said.

"In order to fertilise the Middle East, in order to produce food for our children, we have to work together," Mr. Peres said.

"I do believe that all this can be implemented only if the outside world will come and help."

Among the multinational companies the forum and an exhibition of Israeli hi-tech and other products, are Coca-Cola International, Ford, Brown and Williamson Tobacco Corp, Merrill Lynch, ATT and Dow Chemical.

The head of the PLO's economic department, Ahmad Quriea, was invited to the conference but said a visit to Israel would be premature.

Israel and the PLO signed a historic peace deal in September but have not been able to finalise details on withdrawing Israeli troops and implementing Palestinian self-rule.

Jordan confirms talks freeze

(Continued from page 1)

round of talks rather than "suspending" negotiations.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) also announced Monday that it was suspending its self-rule negotiations with Israel.

Well-informed Jordanian sources believe that the political ramifications of the Hebron massacre should strengthen the hand of Arab negotiators in extracting necessary concessions on the issue of settlements in the occupied territories and alleviate pressure on Jordan to sign a peace treaty with Israel before completing negotiations on their agenda agreement of Sept. 14.

"We are under pressure to reach an Oslo-style agreement before we complete negotiations," a well-informed source said. "Now we may have a break from this pressure."

King Hussein has repeatedly said that Jordan cannot sign before it negotiates in what was seen as a response to U.S. and Israeli pressures on the Kingdom.

Jordanian officials have also been saying that the U.S. believes in creating an "atmosphere of peace" through a public signing ceremony before getting down to the details of negotiating a peace treaty.

Analysts say that since the beginning of the Middle East peace talks in Madrid in 1991, negotiators were unable to deliver what the Arabs would consider a reflection of "international justice."

"Arabs now have a chance to close this gap," an informed source told the Jordan Times.

Public fury in Arab countries, including Jordan, over the massacre of 60 Palestinian worshippers in Hebron by an Israeli settler, has become one of calls for putting an end to Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Demonstrations in the Kingdom during the past three days have been largely organised by the anti-Middle East peace talks camp including Islamists.

If only to avert more public anger, analysts and observers believe, Arab countries cannot move ahead with negotiations unless they are able to produce concrete results which would lead to an end to Israeli occupation and improve living conditions in the occupied territories.

Analysts here believe that while the Hebron massacre served to show how far Israeli extremists were willing to go to stop the talks, the continuation of a deadlock in the Arab-Israeli talks could fuel the extremists among the Islamists and other anti-peace groups in the Middle East.

"It is important to note that unless this gap is closed quickly, it will only serve to strengthen the hands of fundamentalists everywhere," one well-placed analyst said.

Where the reaction to the Hebron massacre could serve the Arab side in negotiations is over the issue of settlements which has so far been relegated to final status negotiations.

"This is a golden opportunity to bring the issue of settlements to the fore again," a Jordanian negotiator told the Jordan Times.

Syria said Monday that the peace process would survive despite the walkout.

A foreign ministry official said Israel's "intransigence and failure to come up with positive initiatives" provoked the Hebron massacre.

However, Syria's decision to pull out of the talks in protest at the massacre "does not mean the end of the peace process" launched in Madrid in October 1991, said the official, quoted by the Syrian Arab News Agency.

Israelis kill 2 Palestinians

(Continued from page 1)

Yitzhak Rabin last October warning that the Hebron mosque killer, Baruch Goldstein, was dangerous and a potential killer.

The massacre by Goldstein on Friday was not his first attack on the Ibrahimi Mosque in the Tomb of the Patriarchs at Hebron, according to the letter.

"A number of Jewish settlers attacked six of the guards of the Ibrahimi Mosque and a 64-year-old worshipper on Friday night, Oct. 8, 1993," reads the letter from the Higher Islamic Council and Waqf in Jerusalem, a trust for Islamic property.

"As the call to night prayer was being made, Baruch (Goldstein) attacked the muezzin (man calling for prayer) and cut the call short.

"He also poured flammable materials on the carpet of the mosque on Oct. 14.

"If it hadn't been for the attentiveness of the guards and worshippers, something dreadful might have happened."

The letter, sent to Mr. Rabin's office on Oct. 18, goes on: "These daily violations in the Ibrahimi Mosque cannot be ignored. Unfortunately, we have never felt that the Israeli authorities have taken a decision against the actions of these hostile settlers."

Chinese President Jiang Zemin has sent a message to Mr. Arafat sternly condemning the massacre, Xinhua reported Sunday.

In the message sent Saturday, Mr. Jiang also expressed his sympathy for the families of the victims, the report said.

The Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs said:

"The Spanish government expresses its profound dismay on the tragic massacre of Palestinians which occured at dawn in Hebron in the occupied territories.

"The Spanish government, which on various occasions has called for the cessation of violence, still considers that the peace process and the early implementation of the declaration of principles are the unique possible alternative against the continued violence and confrontations in the occupied territories.

Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans said that his government was deeply shocked and saddened by the massacre.

Mr. Evans said that Australia condemned without reservation this "senseless slaughter of unarmed worshipers, which threatens to prolong the seemingly endless cycle of conflict and violence between Israelis and Palestinians."

"The Australian government extends its profound sympathy to all of those who have been bereaved or wounded by this outrageous act," Mr. Evans said.

Jurists urge Iraq to reform constitution

GENEVA (Agencies) — The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) on Monday called for major reform of Iraq's constitution and entire legal system, which it blamed for facilitating human rights violations.

ICJ Secretary-General Adama Dieng said a detailed two-year study by his widely-respected organisation which works to promote the rule of law had identified "structural defects that gave the Iraqi leadership total power."

Iraq "is a clear example of how a prevailing legal system facilitates violations of human rights," said Mr. Dieng, a Senegalese lawyer, in an introduction to a 115-page report on the results of the study by ICJ experts.

The ICJ which links 45 top lawyers around the world and has consultative status with the United Nations, has in the past criticised other Arab countries but has also condemned Israel for its behaviour in occupied Arab territories.

The report was issued just days after a U.N. investigator accused Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Defence Minister Ali Hassan Al Majeed of committing "crimes against humanity."

The investigator, former Netherlands Foreign Minister Max van der Stoel, in his own report for the U.N. Human Rights Commission, said the two supervised a system of state terror granting sweeping impunity to security forces.

The ICJ report, entitled "Iraq and the Rule of Law," said while the 1970 constitution stipulated sovereignty as belonging to the people, the Revolution Command Council ruled the land.

The constitution did not specify duration of the council's mandate nor the term in office of its members, the report said.

The Iraqi people, it declared, "are in no way involved in the choice of members of the Revolution Command Council and cannot call them to account."

The four million Kurds in the northern part of the country suffered repression, although the current constitution was the first to recognise Kurdish ethnic identity and explicitly provided for Kurdish autonomy, the report said.

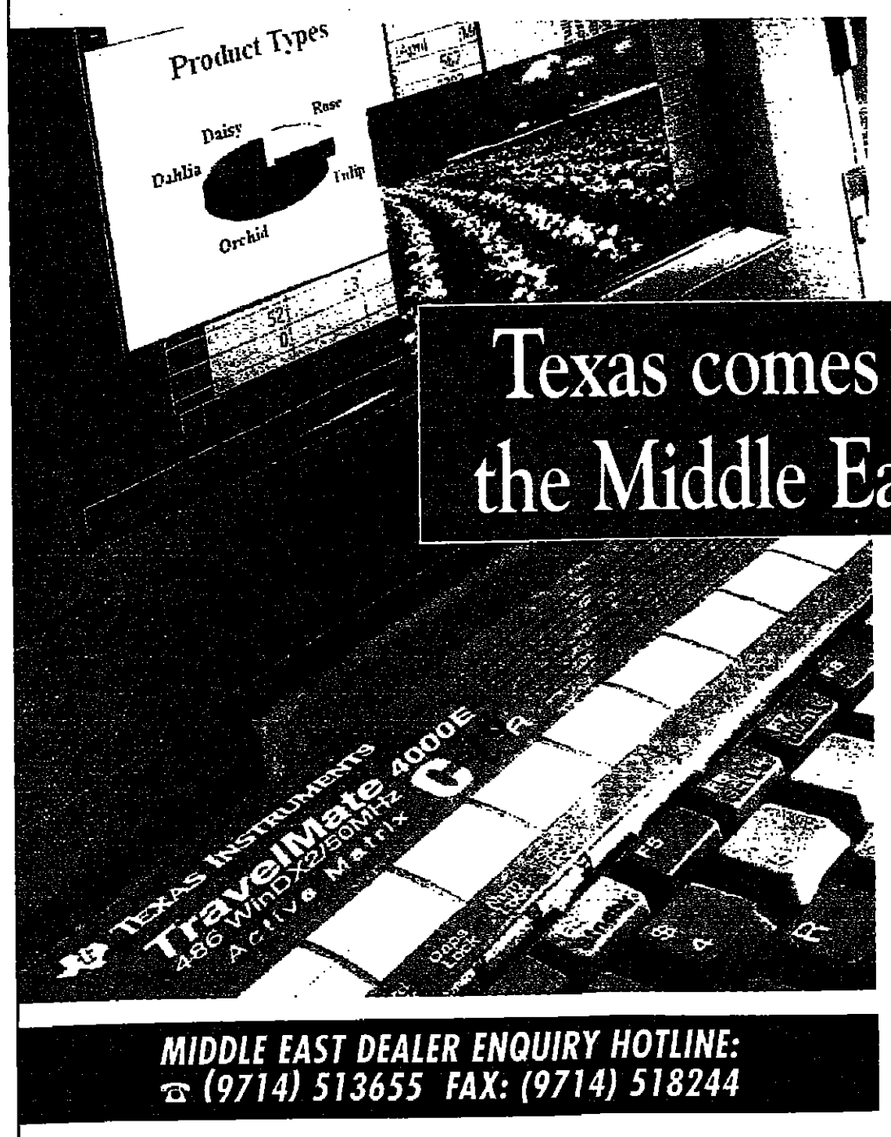
"In spite of the positive nature of these provisions, however, actual practice, illustrated by the gross violations of human rights in the Kurdish region, detract from their credibility, the ICJ declared.

In a comment on the report included as an annex by the ICJ, Iraq said the study "lacks scientific objectivity and realism."

It complained that the ICJ has ignored "flagrant violations of international law during the assault on Iraq by those countries which claim to be democratic," the Baghdad response declared.

It was clearly referring to attacks on Iraq during the Gulf war of 1991 in which a United States-led alliance forced Baghdad to pull out of Kuwait, which Iraqi forces seized in 1990.

In Washington a human rights organisation said it plans to bring charges of genocide against Iraq at the International Court of Justice for the 1988 campaign against the Kurdish minority.



You can share in a little bit of history as the best notebook gets even better

One Notebook PC manufacturer has made computing history by winning five PC Magazine Editors' Choice Awards in a single issue.

PC Magazine gave its prestigious Editors' Choice Awards to five TI TravelMate 4000 Notebooks. This is the first time in history that one manufacturer earned so many awards in just one issue.

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Weighing a mere 6.2 pounds, including battery, the 4000E takes just 15 seconds to power up to Windows, thanks to the built-in Windows 3.1. With 4MB of main memory, expandable to 20MB, and a 200MB hard disk drive, the 4000E is ready for today's as well as tomorrow's software.

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German central bank sets stage for lower interest rates

FRANKFURT (R) — The Bundesbank Monday paved the way for a modest decline in a key German interest rate, just two days after the Group of Seven (G-7) declared that global inflation was being brought under control.

"It is the first step towards a credit easing," said Gerhard Grebe, economist at Band Julius Baer.

The Central Bank said it would offer funds to the money market this week at variable interest rates, after supplying liquidity at a fixed rate of six per cent since early December.

Economists said the technical adjustment should open up scope for a marginal decline in the bank's most important money market rate — its securities repurchase rate, or "repo" rate, which sets the tone for other money-market interest rates.

"I am convinced the Bundesbank wants this rate to come down," said BHF-bank chief economist Hermaan Remsperger. Under variable-rate repurchase tenders, the banks themselves decide the rate they want to pay for funds.

The prospects of lower money-market interest rates is good news for German financial markets, which have been under strong recent pressure on fears that that higher U.S. interest rates could slow down the pace of monetary easing, even though economic recovery in Germany remains hesitant.

Although uncertainty about the extent of any reduction in the securities repurchase rate meant that market reaction to the Bundesbank's signal in Germany was muted, both stock and debt prices moved higher on the news.

A decline in money-market interest rates in Germany had been on the cards ever since the Bundesbank announced on Feb. 17 that it was cutting its discount lending rate by half a percentage point to 5.25 per cent.

And prospects of an easing were boosted further at the weekened when policymakers from the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations made optimistic forecasts for inflation.

"Inflation has receded," said U.S. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen after Saturday's meeting near Frankfurt with ministers from Japan, Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Canada.

The meeting's host, Bonn Finance Minister Theo Waigel, said the G-7 had come significantly closer to achieving its goal of sustained non-inflationary growth.

Mr. Waigel was backed up by the release Monday of positive price data from the German state of Bavaria, where the annual inflation rate in February fell to 2.9 per cent from 3.2 per cent. That was the first time inflation in any of the key German regional states had fallen below three per cent since July 1992.

Economists expect west German February inflation to fall to as a low as 3.2 per cent from January's 3.5 per cent.

Services disrupted as walkouts spread

Meanwhile striking German transport workers disrupted German cities Monday as industrial unrest spread from the engineering industry to the public sector.

Bus and train drivers in the industrial heartland of North Rhine-Westphalia prevented thousands of workers from getting to their jobs on time. Protest stoppages lasted for several hours.

The action against employer-calls for a wage freeze and benefit cuts was the latest in a series of disputes over pay and job security hitting the German economy as it struggles to emerge from recession.

In the crucial engineering sector, 100,000 workers in north Germany began voting Monday on a full strike.

Results of the ballot are due Wednesday and the I.G. Metall union expects a full strike to start on March 7.

The ballot follows weeks of mass walkouts and demonstrations which have halted production at many of Germany's key car and engineering firms.

Monday's public sector walkouts were focused on Germany's most populous state of North Rhine-Westphalia, but other cities across Germany were also hit, the OETV service union said.

The OETV, which in 1992 plunged Germany into chaos with an 11-day strike, has said all public services from waste collection to administration would be hit by walkouts across Germany in the next two days.

The action is intended to put public employers under pressure to make a wage offer at fourth-round talks next week.

In Duesseldorf, a tram driver made clear her anger at the employer calls for a wage freeze. "It stinks," she said.

Another protester warned that Germany should brace for further disruption. "This is only the beginning," he said.

Refuse collectors in Cologne and Muelheim planned stoppages later in the day, as did staff at Bochum University and local civil servants in several towns across the region.

Post office and public telephone employees, involved in a separate dispute with employers, held token stoppages overnight in several large cities including Munich, Berlin and Stuttgart.

Their union, the DPG, announced there would be further disruptions to telephone services in cities including Frankfurt, Hamburg and Stuttgart.

In the engineering industry, a full strike looked ever more likely with no new sign emerging over the weekend that the two sides were ready to compromise.

Tyll Necker, president of the German Industry Association (BDI), stressed in an interview with German radio Monday that even to agree a wage freeze would be a concession on the part of the employers who really needed to cut wages.

"There is less than nothing (in terms of extra income) to distribute this year," he said, adding that the engineering and electronics industry had cut back 600,000 jobs since mid-1991.

The union is seeking a moderate pay rise and job guarantees.

Iraq aims for higher OPEC quota

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq will demand a higher OPEC quota than before the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis once the U.N. oil embargo is lifted. Oil Minister Safaa Hadi Jawad has said.

Mr. Jawad told the English-language daily Baghdad Observer that Iraq had the same OPEC quota as Iran before the crisis — 3.14 million barrels per day (b/d) — but Iran's was later raised to 3.6 million b/d. "Therefore, Iraq's quota should be increased as well," he argued. However, Mr. Jawad vowed that Baghdad would "respect its OPEC-set quota" and was "committed to the quotas set by OPEC, even if such quotas do not serve its interests." A delegation of Iraqi oil officials is to visit Paris soon to hold talks with French oil companies, Mr. Jawad said. Iraq has been under an international oil and trade embargo since its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Libya sanctions squeeze Arab Banking Corp head

MANAMA (R) — The man who built Arab Banking Corp BSC (ABC) into the largest Middle East bank in terms of assets is resigning as president and chief executive, apparent victim of Libyan-related U.N. sanctions.

ABC said Monday that Libyan national Abdullah Saudi would step aside as president and chief executive effective May 1.

It attributed it only to "external circumstances," but bankers said it was clear ABC had acted to try to avoid U.N. sanctions authorised to try to force Libya to hand over suspects in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland.

"Notwithstanding record-breaking results for 1993, the board of directors reluctantly agreed with the president and chief executive that, owing to external circumstances, such a decision was necessary to protect shareholders' interests and safeguard the bank's future," the bank said in a statement.

Mr. Saudi, one of the most respected figures in Arab banking, had crafted ABC from its inception in 1980 to one of the most powerful banks in the region, with a reach extending from London to Hong Kong. ABC had assets of $18.43 billion at the end of 1993.

"It's going to have a major, major impact on the bank," once banker outside ABC commented, noting that the big question on everyone's mind was whom the bank would find to fill his shoes.

The board chose its co-deputy chairman, Abu Dhabi national Khalifa Al Muhairy, to chair a committee from within the bank which would be entrusted with the responsibilities of chief executive officer pending a permanent appointment.

Libya has only a minority stake in ABC — it and the governments of Abu Dhabi and Kuwait each hold about one quarter, the rest held by the general public.

But having a minority Libyan stake did not prevent another Bahrain company, Arab Financial Services (AFS) — which Mr. Saudi chairs — to fall afoul of the U.S. interpretation of the U.N. sanctions.

In December the U.S. Treasury froze AFS's U.S. assets, effectively killing a large part of its business, before reversing the decision in February after strenuous representations from Bahraini authorities.

It was not clear if the treasury insisted on or suggested Mr. Saudi's departure, in order to lessen the Libyan character of the institution, or if some other factors were at work as well.

The ABC statement, while noting that Mr. Saudi has also served as deputy chairman since its inception, did not say whether he would continue in that post.

Nor did it say whether he would continue in the host of other chairmanships and other posts he holds, mostly in connection with ABC, including AFS and Banco Atlantico S.A.

Indian finance minister cuts taxes, tariffs

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Finance Minister Manmohan Singh proposed radical cuts in taxes and tariffs and eased foreign exchange controls Monday in a fiscal 1994-95 budget he said was designed to stimulate industry.

But the stock market reacted negatively to steep cuts in customs duties from a peak rate of 85 to 65 per cent, posing bigger competition to domestic industry trying to emerge from a two-year slump.

The Bombay Stock Exchange index plunged 100 points in a special post-budget trading session in what analysts saw as a knee-jerk reaction that would die down as the positive impact of Mr. Singh's fiscal package sinks in.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao said the budget for the financial year beginning on April 1 "vastly strengthened" the market reforms he launched in 1991, turning India's back on decades of socialist-style protectionism.

Mr. Singh, saying his major task was to stimulate a recession-hit industry despite falling revenues, slashed the corporate tax rate from a prohibitive 51.75 per cent to 40 per cent.

He announced a thorough overhaul of the taxation system, describing it as a "complex maze," and proposed simplified rules and procedures.

The bank lending rate was slashed by one percentage point to 14 per cent in the budget the finance minister unveiled in parliament.

In line with New Delhi's commitment to global lending agencies to increase access to imports, Mr. Singh slashed the maximum customs duty further on top of a 30 per cent cut of last year.

Basic customs duty on capital goods, steel and iron ore were also reduced.

The lower tariffs would make key imported raw material availale to local industry at cheaper rates, the minister said.

He also unveiled cooresponding cuts and concessions in internal excise duties to preserve the competitiveness of domestic industry.

Chemical industry set to boom in Asia-Pacific

SINGAPORE (AFP) — The Asia-Pacific region's chemial industry will undergo major structural changes over the next few years, with local producers meeting more of the region's growing demand, an industry leader said Monday.

Manfred Schneider, chairman of Germany's Bayer A.G. said the turnover in chemicals in the Asia-Pacific region for 1991 was $276 billion — 23 per cent of the world total.

He told the fourth annual chemical week Asia-Pacific conference here that between 1992 and 1991, Asia's share of world chemical exports grew from 12 per cent to more than 16 per cent.

Imports by news industrialising countries gave the region an import surplus of $14 billion, he said.

"Imports will decrease and we can expect that a large and growing part of demand will be met by companies operating in the region itself," he said.

Mr. Schneider said that with a combination of lower costs and modern technology, Asian countries would not only serve their domestic markets, but "will become exporters to other regions of the world."

"In line with the overall growth of the Asia-Pacific, the demand for the products and services of the chemical industry will increase considerably in coming years," he said.

He said the Asia-Pacific region already played an important role as the home of major chemical industry customers, such as the textile, electronics and automotive engineering industries, as well as the chemical industry itself.

The automotive industry, together with its suppliers, was another of the chemical industry's main customers, and was growing at a far faster rate in the Asia-Pacific region than in Europe and North America, said Mr. Schneider.

Aluminium Bahrain considers output cuts

MANAMA (R) — Aluminium Bahrain BSC (Alba), the Gulf's largest aluminium producer, said Monday it was discussing the possibility of joining international efforts to rescue the world aluminium market.

It marked a switch for the company, which together with others in the Middle East had shown little interest in joining the cuts but which was encouraged by the results undertaken by other producers so far.

Specifically, Alba chief executive Gudvin Tofte told Reuters the company was discussing possible cuts with other producers in the Middle East, including in Dubai and Egypt.

He was speaking after Alba issued a joint statement with the Bahrain Saudi Aluminium Marketing Co. (Balco), which markets 97 per cent of Alba's output.

"Bahrain has been monitoring the ongoing discussions which are taking place among the world aluminium community in order to reestablish a balance between supply and demand in the primary aluminium market," it said.

"As a responsible member of this community, we have great understanding for these talks and the effort to facilitate a return to normal conditions," the statement continued. "Discussions are also in progress with other Middle East producers in order to coordinate joint regional support."

Mr. Tofte conceded that this marked a shift from inactivity to possible action and said there were two reasons: "First, we started seeing that what is being done is more successful than we thought at the beginning. Second, it makes sense."

He also said that due to complex shareholding Middle East producers are sometimes not able to make decisions overnight.

Nigerian currency slumps on black market

LAGOS (R) — The Nigerian naira fell Monday on the illegal black market to 50 to the dollar compared with its fixed official rate of 22, operators said.

They said the fall was due to the acute shortage of foreign exchange in the sub-Saharan Africa's biggest economy.

"Many people want dollars and pounds sterling but we don't have enough," said Sule Ilyasu, one of the scores of money changers operating openly at Tinubu Square in central Lagos.

The naira had been selling in the black market at about 45 to the dollar since January when the military government banned the free market and fixed the naira's exchange rate at twice its market value, reversing seven years of free market reforms.

But the black market continues to thrive although police sometimes swoop on money changers and arrest some of them.

"Once the raid is over we come out again because people need our service," Mr. Ilyasu said.

Under the new policy, the Central Bank of Nigeria allocates foreign exchange to importers through the banks.

The first such allocation took place a week ago but only $200 million was provided by the central bank compared with the demand for foreign exchange totalling $1.1 billion.

The central bank is giving priority to manufacturers in the allocation of foreign currency because government says it wants to revive idle industries in order to resuscitate the economy.

The next allocation is due Thursday.

Bankers said the amount the central bank would provide on Thursday may be less than $200 million because of declining income from the export of crude oil, Nigeria's main foreign exchange earner.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY MARCH 1, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Midday is fine for getting into all sorts of new and interesting outlets that could be profitable in the future and you can get a lot accomplished now if you apply yourself in your best manner.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Try to help associates solve a problem and gain their goodwill. Don't take risks with money at this time. Avoid a troublemaker who will make problems.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be sure to use utmost care in motion and avoid possible accident. Steer clear of one who likes to criticize you and make you feel small.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You may be confused about finances in the morning, but later you can advance with clarity. Cut down on expenses and you will have more money when there is a emergency.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Be more kind instead of forceful with your friends and gain their respect. This is not a good day for taking risks in any instance.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be precise in handling important business matters and avoid trouble later. A new plan needs more study to be successful in the long run.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't criticize a loyal friend in the morning or there could be a severance of connections. Think along optimistic lines and all will be fine.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Wait until the afternoon before going after your aims and get excellent results. Show others that you are alert and clever in any circumstance.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't postpone important duties in the morning or you will regret it. Don't trust your intuition during the day or you could be in a bad situation.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Some business or other matters could worry you during the day, but by evening all is okay. Maintain your poise and don't allow any problems to disturb you.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Morning may find an associate to be annoying, so keep your distance. Postpone handling a business matter until a more prosperous moment.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You are gregarious by nature and this is a fine time to visit old friends and exchange views. Safeguard your health against any unexpected.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A fine day to contact influential persons who can help you advance in your career. Make long-range plans for the future.

THE BETTER HALF® By Glasbergen

"Know where we went wrong? We never should have ended our first date!"

JUMBLE® THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

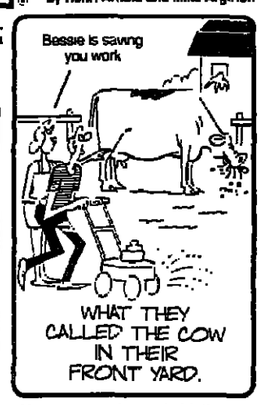
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

WOGAL

MAGDO

RABLER

PENOLL



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cantoon.

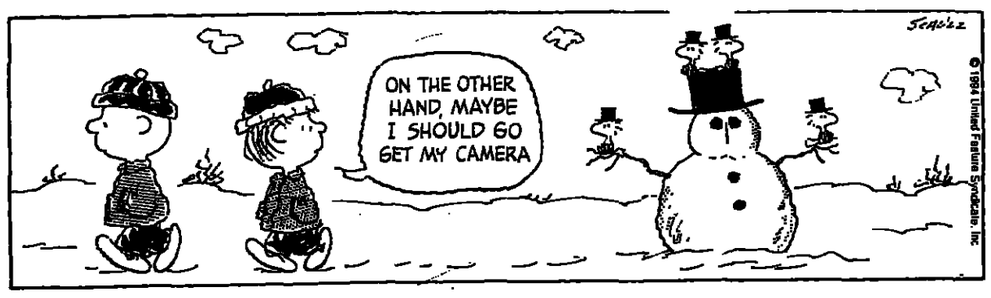
Answer: A "____ ____ — ____"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PANIC TYPED JUNKET THRUSH

Answer: What the struggling violinist did — KEPT HIS CHIN UP

Peanuts

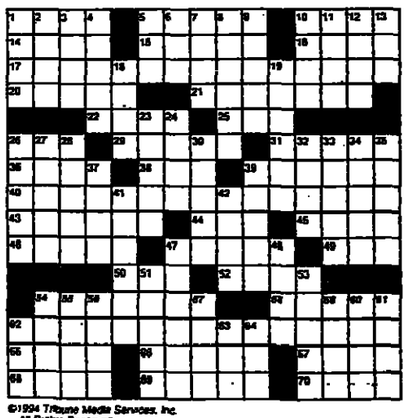


Andy Capp

Mutt'n'Jeff

هكذا من الأصل

THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson



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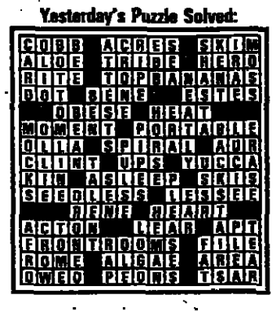
ACROSS
1 Bundle of hay
5 Certain brick
10 Tiny branch
14 Biblical land
15 Coat feature
16 Take for a —
17 Had a ball at a ball?
20 Drum type
21 Hide
22 Tall tale
25 Consumed
26 Joke
29 Cultivated land
31 "— difference a day makes"
36 Rainbow
38 New Deal initials
39 Tracts of land
40 One gal's woes at a ball?
43 Thrown into dearray
44 Food fish
45 Other
46 Pierces
47 Deserve
48 Tennis term
50 Worldwide gp.
52 Over again
54 Make manifest
58 Long and slender
62 Whom Sing Crosby wooed?
65 Exile isle
66 First name in cosmetics
67 Number of Muses
68 Legal paper
69 Adjust the clock
70 Wise one

DOWN
1 "Porgy and —"
2 Thicke
3 Kilauea output
4 Abrasive
5 Church
6 Calendar division
7 Chooses
8 Decapitate
9 Choose by vote
10 Family or shoe bottom
11 Grow flaccid
12 Just loafing
13 — whiz!
18 Unheeding
19 Suds producer
23 Washer cycle
24 Sleuth Wolfe
26 Opera hat
27 "— we all?"
28 Funny Radner
30 Knight's weapon
32 Abhor
33 Coral island
34 "— are the times..."
35 Business plus
37 Slovenly one
39 Swedish explorer
41 Store fodder
42 Israeli dance
47 Sullen
48 Expression
51 Kind of beam
53 Causes to give up a habit
54 Remove
55 German river
56 Attired
57 Newts
59 Border lake
60 Unit of force
61 River to the North Sea
62 Flower or river end
63 Observe
64 Asian holiday

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI
TELEPHONE: 660170 / 663170
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 28/02/1994

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADED VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK	14,040	192.500	193.000	192.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	61,883	8.000	8.050	7.950
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK.	375,951	2.390	2.380	2.330
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	6,171	3.450	3.400	3.380
THE HOUSING BANK	8,502	6.320	6.320	6.280
JORDAN KUWAIT BANK	46,366	3.210	3.210	3.220
JORDAN GULF BANK	242,179	2.220	2.250	2.240
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	11,163	4.420	4.440	4.430
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK/NEW	85,092	4.260	4.260	4.240
UNION BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	4,120	5.110	5.150	5.150
BUSINESS BANK	67,414	4.350	4.380	4.320
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	43,184	9.000	9.100	9.460
BEIT ELMAL SAVING&INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	1,175	4.700	4.700	4.700
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	164,990	2.090	2.090	2.070
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK.	32,279	2.480	2.500	2.430
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	3,640	2.600	2.600	2.600
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	22,207	3.700	3.650	3.680
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	24,529	2.360	2.360	2.360
VEHICLES OWNERS FEDERATION	4,350	7.500	7.250	7.250
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	3,713	4.980	4.960	4.960
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	3,287	2.400	2.440	2.420
JORDAN TOURISM & SPA COMPLEX	6,510	0.770	0.780	0.760
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	19,298	4.460	4.430	4.440
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	7,705	1.750	1.750	1.750
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / AL-RA'I	5,099	13.700	13.600	13.600
JORDAN PRESS & PUBLISHING /AD-DUSTOUR	24,559	15.780	16.540	16.080
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	16,986	2.250	2.240	2.240
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	26,194	3.790	3.800	3.750
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	62,920	3.130	3.120	3.120
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	160	3.000	3.000	3.000
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	8,147	10.380	10.380	10.380
WOOLEN INDUSTRIES	215	2.190	2.150	2.150
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	10,487	7.150	7.150	7.150
THE JORDAN WORSTED MILLS	25,100	12.600	12.580	12.550
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	43,148	7.800	7.800	7.810
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	6,385	6.450	6.450	6.450
JORDAN DAIRY	1,096	3.150	3.130	3.130
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	5,533	4.500	4.460	4.420
THE PUBLIC MINING	780	2.950	3.000	3.000
ARAB CHEMICAL DETERGENTS INDUSTRIES	6,863	18.750	18.750	18.750
SPINNING & WEAVING	276	2.710	2.760	2.760
RAFIA INDUSTRIES	86,100	3.000	3.000	3.000
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	3,780	0.360	0.360	0.360
DAR AL DAWA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	814,986	17.950	18.300	17.700
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	47,423	2.310	2.370	2.320
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	6,598	10.190	10.150	10.150
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1,150	1.530	1.530	1.540
JORDAN MEDICAL CORPORATION	27,413	0.500	0.530	0.490
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	2,558	5.130	5.110	5.110
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	7,077	3.370	3.370	3.370
JORDAN ROCKWOOL INDUSTRIES	5,734	2.170	2.160	2.160
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JIMCO	2,911	1.160	1.150	1.160
JORDAN PRECAST CONCRETE INDUSTRY	996	0.400	0.400	0.390
JORDAN WOOD INDUSTRIES / JWICO	1,538	5.900	6.150	6.150
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	3,615	7.300	7.230	7.230
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	8,229	3.350	3.400	3.350
KAWTHER INVESTMENT	1,894	2.500	2.500	2.440
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	224,969	5.900	5.840	5.830
GRAND TOTAL	2,690,957			

NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET : 232243
TRADED VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET : JD 311471

Financial Markets
Jordan Times in co-operation with **Cairo Amman Bank**

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 25/2/94	Tokyo Close Date 28/2/94
Sterling Pound	1.4885	1.4883
Deutsche Mark	1.7110	1.7080
Swiss Franc	1.4295	1.4260
French Franc	5.8100	5.8212**
Japanese Yen	104.80	104.30
European Curreny Unit	1.1305	1.1299**

USD Per STG
European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates Date: 28/2/1994

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.2500	3.4375	3.5625	4.0000
Sterling Pound	4.9375	4.9375	5.0000	5.0625
Deutsche Mark	5.9375	5.7500	5.5625	5.2500
Swiss Franc	4.0000	3.9375	3.8125	3.6875
French Franc	6.1250	6.0625	5.8750	5.6875
Japanese Yen	2.1250	2.0625	2.0625	2.0625
European Currency Unit	6.4300	6.2800	6.1500	5.8100

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals Date: 28/2/1994

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	379.95	7.50	Silver	5.24	0.120

21 karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 28/2/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6980	0.7000
Sterling Pound	1.0565	1.0417
Deutsche Mark	0.4076	0.4096
Swiss Franc	0.4875	0.4899
French Franc	0.1199	0.1205
Japanese Yen	0.6679	0.6712
Dutch Guilder	0.3630	0.3648
Swedish Krona	******	******
Italian Lira	0.0414	0.0416
Belgian Franc	******	******

Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 28/2/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8320	1.8480
Lebanese Lira	0.040345	0.041755
Saudi Riyal	0.1858	0.1867
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3380	2.3600
Qatari Riyal	0.1895	0.1905
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7900	1.8060
UAE Dirham	0.1895	0.1905
Greek Drachma	0.2725	0.3175
Cypriot Pound	1.3250	1.3740

Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. $1.00 costs	1.3483/93	Canadian dollar
	1.7126/36	Deutschemarks
	1.9228/38	Dutch guilders
	1.4285/95	Swiss francs
	35.24/28	Belgian francs
	5.8205/55	French francs
	1689.7/1.2	Italian lire
	104.35/45	Japanese yen
	8.0158/58	Swedish crowns
	6.7140/90	Norwegian crowns
	7.4335/85	Danish crowns
One sterling	$1.4862/72	
One ounce of gold	$380.55/381.05	

Wider British trade gap sparks concern over exports

LONDON (R) — Britain's visible trade gap with countries outside the European Union widened to £758 million ($1.12 billion) in January from £671 million ($994 million) in December, the central statistical office has said.

With monthly figures covering European Union trade — 55 per cent of all Britain's trade — lagging behind due to the introduction of new data-gathering procedures, the deficit with the rest of the world was in line with forecasts and had no impact on markets preoccupied with world interest rates.

But some economists expressed concern about the accumulation of deficits that could be storing up balance-of-payments problems for the future.

They homed in on the volume of exports excluding oil and erratic items like aircraft and gems. This fell 0.5 per cent in the three months of January compared with the previous three. On the same basis, imports rose by 3.5 per cent.

"The slowing pace of export volume growth, together with the steady rise in imports, is disappointing, particularly when one of our major export markets, the U.S., is experiencing strong growth," said David Coleman, an economist at the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce in London.

The figures put a dispute with Malaysia over British press criticism of business practices there into sharp focus. If exporters are already having trouble winning contracts, they can ill-afford to lose Malaysian deals through circumstances beyond their control.

A deteriorating deficit might push interest rates up over the medium term as the government seeks to dampen consumer spending, putting economic recovery at risk, economists said.

Don Smith of Midland Global Markets said the export trend was not that surprising given the appreciation of sterling in the second half of 1993. It would have taken some time to affect orders, and the impact was coming through now, he said.

Gerard Lyons at DKB International advocated an interest-rate cut to keep sterling competitive. The economy was fragile and inflationary pressures weak, and both those factors argued for a cut, he said.

UAE private sector helps boost manufacturing

DUBAI (Agencies) — A drive by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to encourage a bigger private sector role in the economy is bearing fruit in the manufacturing industry, an official report has said.

But there is still some ground to be gained before private participation matches public sector investment, the Emirates Industrial Bank (EIB) said in its report sent to Reuters.

The UAE, whose economy relies heavily on oil income, has said it aims to stimulate private investment in non-oil industries to try and offset the impact of changes in oil prices, which are currently near five-year lows.

"The UAE federal authorities... are channelling their efforts into creating an enabling environment for the private sector to develop," the bank said. "The private sector appears to have responded well to the challenge so far."

Traditionally the UAE economy was fuelled by oil revenues and propped up by government cash. The EIB suggested lack of market information was discouraging private capital flow.

The bank is currently trying to entice UAE nationals into sinking their funds into a bee-keeping project to produce honey from local desert flowers as part of a series of non-oil projects to increase private sector activity.

"There is undoubtedly a continuing level of private sector interest in developing new projects... to take the process beyond the initial stage requires detailed information about market trends," it said.

The EIB, the UAE's main source for independent industrial financing, approved loans worth 146 million dirhams ($40 million) in 1993 up from 108 million dirhams ($29 million) in 1992. About 36 per cent of funds went to food industries.

The bank said private investment in manufacturing led to the creation of new food processing, beverage and tobacco plants. It helped spur investment in those activities to 808 million dirhams ($220 million) in 1993 from 738 million dirhams ($201 million) in 1992.

But the amount withers in comparison to the volume of public sector funds dominating chemicals, plastics and petroleum products manufacturing, which grew to six billion dirhams ($1.6 billion) in 1993 from 5.4 billion dirhams ($1.5 billion) in 1992.

The government said last week that it was pumping more funds into industries and other productive sectors as part of a drive to lessen reliance on unstable oil earnings.

Productive projects now account for nearly two thirds of the public and private investments compared with less than one third during the oil boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s, when priority was given to the infrastructure.

Investments totalled 29.8 billion dirhams ($8.11 billion) in 1992, as high as 22.9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP). They were projected to have risen to 30.1 billion dirhams ($8.2 billion) in 1993, nearly 23 per cent of the GDP, the planning ministry said in a report.

They stood at 25.79 billion dirhams ($7 billion) in 1991 and 24.06 billion dirhams ($6.55 billion), the report said.

Productive ventures received 56.9 per cent of the 1992 investments, 58.5 per cent in 1991 and 60.5 per cent in 1990, it said.

"This shows that the UAE is now giving priority to productive sectors as conditions have become right for such development which will boost income and achieve a balance in the economic structure," the report said.

The bulk of the investment was channelled by the private sector, which is encouraged by government incentives for industrial projects and the absence of income taxes. But experts believe private investments could be far higher if the UAE's massive energy sector opens up for the private sector.

The government has controlled oil and gas industries on the grounds they are strategic but it has allowed foreign firms to retain a 40 per cent ownership.

Most of the UAE's non-oil industries are light products such as cement, paper, chemicals, home appliances, foodstuffs and clothes. Incentives for industrial projects include soft-term loans, marketing facilities and financing feasibility studies.

The report showed private investments rose to 20.3 billion dirhams ($5.53 billion) in 1993 from 19.7 billion dirhams ($5.36 billion) in 1992 and 16.9 billion dirhams ($4.6 billion) in 1991.

A breakdown for 1992 showed oil-related industries received the lion's share of the funds, with investments of 7.5 billion dirhams ($2.04 billion). It was followed by non-oil industries, which received around 4.72 billion dirhams ($1.28 billion).

In the services sector, investments stood at 5.19 billion dirhams ($1.41 billion) in communication, at 2.9 billion dirhams ($790 million) in water and electricity, at 1.4 billion dirhams ($381 million) in real estate and 3.55 billion dirhams ($967 million) in other services.

The UAE produces 2.16 million barrels per day of oil and a sharp decline in crude prices over the past decade has prompted it and other Gulf producers to cut spending and seek other sources of income.

High public and private investments have boosted the share of the non-oil sector in the gross domestic product to nearly 60 per cent from less than 40 per cent in 1980. The non-oil GDP stood at 80.3 billion dirhams ($21.88 billion) in 1993 and oil at 51.3 billion dirhams ($13.97 billion).

Per capita income, among the highest in the world, was estimated at 63.2 billion dirhams ($17.22 billion) in 1993 compared with 67.9 billion dirhams ($18.5 billion) in 1990.

Indonesia's banks have $12.7b of bad debts

JAKARTA (AFP) — The Indonesian banking sector has accumulated $12.67 billion in bad debts, a reliable banking source said here Monday.

The seven state banks, which dominate the Indonesian banking sector, hold $9.17 billion dollars in bad debts and non-performing loans that are already lost or likely to be hard to recuperate, the source who declined to be identified, told AFP.

The sum of $9.17 billion not only includes bad loans issued to individuals or enterprises, which usually figure in the banks' annual balance sheet, but also other off balance sheet financial commitments, such as letters of credits, with doubtful repayment prospects.

The figure accounts for 21 per cent of the banks' total earning assets — which include loans, productive investments, as well as other financial commitments — which stood at 92.4 trillion rupiah (43.25 billion).

The corresponding figure for the country's private banking sector nears seven trillion rupiah ($3.5 billion) out of earning assets totalling 74 trillion rupiah, the source said.

There are more than 200 private banks in Indonesia, including foreign banks and joint ventures.

Finance Minister Mar'ie Muhammad told a parliamentary commission here on Feb. 19 that bad loans incurred by state banks had reached the "critical point" of $7.12 billion dollars.

The sum, however, only covered doubtful or substandard loans and did not include some $2 billion in real losses already made public, the source said.

In the wake of the discovery of a multi-million dollars banking scam involving a letter of credit issued by a state bank earlier this month, the legislators had demanded a full accounting of the state banks' performances.

Sema Group announces profits rise

PARIS (AFP) — Sema Group, the Franco-British computer firm, made an after-tax profit of £17.9 million ($26.5 million) in 1993, up by 30 per cent from £13.8 million in 1992.

Turnover rose by 20.5 per cent to £502 million.

Sema Group's core business remains systems integration, with turnover up by 15.5 per cent to £367 million. Turnover from the facilities management sector rose by a faster than expected 64 per cent to £98 million.

Bonn reaches agreement with Iran on debt rescheduling

BONN (R) — German and Iranian officials have agreed on a framework for refinancing Iranian debt arrears, the German economics ministry said Sunday.

A ministry spokeswoman told Reuters that talks on Friday night had produced agreement on a four-year timetable for debt repayments covering some four billion marks ($2.3 billion) of arrears. Repayment would begin on Dec. 31, 1995.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Mahammoud Vaezi was quoted on Tehran radio as saying Iran did not make any concessions to Germany for the agreement which he hoped could be used "as a model for the repayment of financial obligations to other Western countries."

The Iranian delegation, including central bank governor Mohammad Hossein Adeli, will hold talks with the banks this week, the German economics ministry spokeswoman said.

"The agreement is therefore not yet signed and delivered." the spokeswoman said, referring to Iran's talks with the banks.

German officials have said Iran's debt arrears arose from credits guaranteed by Germany's Hermes export credit agency. The ministry spokeswoman said Iran had suffered liquidity problems.

Iranian press reports have said that most of Iran's short-term debt of $9 billion was owed to Germany.

The $9 billion figure appears to refer to arrears on short-term debt and not the total debt which is variously put by bankers at $20-$30 billion.

Mr. Adeli was quoted in a Tehran newspaper in January as saying Iran had arrears of $8 billion on its foreign debt, mostly in the form of trade credits.

The German government is seeking interim financing arrangements by banks which would mean it would not have to cover the losses.

If no arrangements are agreed, the debts would have to be covered from the federal budget, a solution the economics ministry ruled out Sunday.

Arrears on exports from small firms, totalling some 100 million marks ($60 million), will have to be repaid immediately.

The economics ministry spokeswoman said that larger exporters made their agreement conditional on Iran repaying interest that has already accumulated. The ministry could not immediately provide figures.

Riyadh approves 381 projects

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia approved 381 industrial projects, mostly in the petrochemical sector, in the last eight months of 1993, an official has said. The Saudi Press Agency quoted Mohammad Amin Sindi, head of the licensing department at the ministry of industry, as saying the estimated capital investments in the projects would reach 7.7 billion riyals ($2 billion). He said the approved projects included refining of lubricants and production of fertilisers, chemical detergents, clothing, foodstuffs, iron rods and well drilling and gas transport pipes. The Saudi economy depends mainly on oil and petrochemical exports but in recent years the kingdom has been investing in the development of an advanced industrial base and increasing non-oil exports.

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N. Korea ignores invitation to hold talks with South

SEOUL (R) — North Korea Monday failed to respond to an invitation from the South to the negotiating table, dashing hopes for early resolution to a dispute over Pyongyang's nuclear programme.

South Korea's Vice Unification Minister Song Young-Dae earlier in the day proposed by telephone that the two Koreas talk Tuesday at the village of Panmunjom, straddling the heavily-fortified demilitarised zone.

"Contrary to expectations, we received no reply to our message as of 5 p.m. (0800 GMT) when our office closed," a spokesman at the South-North Dialogue Office in Seoul said.

"This is very disappointing... there may be no meeting tomorrow," he said.

The spokesman said it was still possible, but unlikely, that North Korea would respond Tuesday morning, a national holiday in the South, in time for a meeting.

South Korea hoped the outcome of Tuesday's proposed talks would be a selection of special envoys to discuss a row over the North's suspected nuclear arms programme, and the opening of a new chapter in North-South relations.

"We hope both sides can work out details of a proposed exchange of special envoys as early as possible and sign an agreement," Mr. Song said in his telephone message to the North.

The two Koreas have held three rounds of border talks to discuss such an exchange. But the North broke off contacts last November after the South rejected its call to end the joint U.S.-South Korea annual "Team Spirit" military exercises.

Seoul saw a meeting between the two Koreas, still technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean conflict, as possible after the North agreed Friday with the United States to allow international inspections of its nuclear facilities.

The agreement avoided a showdown with Washington and its allies over fears the North is trying to develop nuclear arms.

In return for allowing inspections, the United States committed to cancel "Team Spirit" and schedule a third round of high-level U.S.-North Korean talks for the third week in March.

But the U.S. commitment hinged on resumption of a North-South nuclear dialogue and a special envoys exchange.

South Korea's Defence Ministry had said it would announce suspension of "Team Spirit" Tuesday at the conclusion of the proposed border meeting. Now it says it will not do so.

Six inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the U.N. nuclear watchdog, left Vienna Sunday and were expected in North Korea Tuesday to sift nuclear sites for evidence radioactive fuel have been diverted secretly to build atomic weapons.

The inspectors will probe the North's seven declared nuclear sites, uninspected for a year to retrieve and replace film from automatic surveillance cameras and change seals on inspection equipment.

But this will only partly establish whether the North is covertly building nuclear weapons. IAEA Director-General Hans Blix has noted inconsistencies in data North Korea offered to balance its nuclear fuel accounts.

Definitive verification can only occur if the IAEA gets is allowed to visit two nuclear sites that the West suspects are involved in a nuclear bomb project, Mr. Blix says.

North Korea insists the sites are military facilities unrelated to its nuclear energy programme.

South Korean President Kim Young-Sam Friday offered to meet North Korean President Kim Il-Sung and to conduct joint economic projects once the nuclear issue is resolved.

Meanwhile, the chief of South Korea's internal intelligence agency said Monday that rumours Kim Jong-Il, son and heir of North Korea's Stalinist leader Kim Il-Sung, had been seriously injured were groundless.

"It is known that Kim Jong-Il sustained slight injuries to his leg on his birthday," a spokesman for the Agency for National Security Planning (NSP) quoted Director Kim Deok as saying.

"It is also known that Kim has some problems with his heart because of his weight but we are convinced that rumours about his serious illness were exaggerated," Mr. Kim Deok was quoted as telling the National Assembly's Defence Committee.

Earlier this month, the leader of South Korea's main opposition Democratic Party, Lee Ki-Taek, said he heard from a foreign diplomatic source that Kim Jong-Il had sustained serious but unspecified injuries.

Mr. Lee backed up his report by saying there were no sightings even on television of the so-called "dear leader" during major celebrations for Kim Jong-Il's 52nd birthday held on Feb. 16.

Watchers of North Korea said then the younger Kim had not been seen in public since Dec. 9, when he attended a meeting of the Supreme People's Assembly, North Korea's parliament, but there was no indication of anything amiss.

The NSP director said his agency had a picture of Kim Jong-Il voting at a parliamentary session on Dec. 21.

Little is known of the heir to the world's last Stalinist state. Kim Jong-Il was designated successor to his "great leader" father Kim Il-Sung in 1974 and has a reputation for secrecy and brinkmanship.

Zapatista National Liberation Army leader Subcommandante Marcos (left) speaks to reporters in San Cristobal De Las Casas, Mexico (AFP photo)

Mexican rebels want Salinas to quit

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (AFP) — A rebel demand that President Carlos Salinas resign as the first step of a dramatic democratic reform programme is threatening government-guerrilla peace talks here.

Representatives of the Zapatista National Liberation Army negotiating an end to two months of unrest with a federal envoy shocked observers late last week by insisting that Mr. Salinas step down to that a transition government could be formed as a first step toward what they called truly free elections, even as progress was reported in the peace negotiations.

Mr. Salinas' ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) has been in power since 1929 and is regularly accused of electoral fraud by opposition parties. Presidential elections already are scheduled for August.

As late as Tuesday, ethnic-Maya rebel leaders negotiating in the 16th-century cathedral here with federal envoy Manuel Camacho and mediator Samuel Ruiz, this city's Roman Catholic bishop, said talks were progressing and that one half of their agenda priorities had been addressed.

But the rebels' shift toward emphasising issues of national democratic reform despite the government's desire to discuss only the situation in Chiapas has put the talks in danger at a critical point, observers said.

The rebels launched their uprising in Chiapas New Year's Day to press Mexico City to give urgent economic and health care aid to the country's poorest state, populated mostly by indigenous farmers.

They briefly seized six towns before being driven into the hills by army troops.

The government declared a unilateral ceasefire after the crackdown, which cost the lives of at least 100 people, according to its own figures. Local Roman Catholic Church officials put the toll at closer to 400.

Once the rebels sat down at the talks which began here last Monday, they and the government reported progress.

De Klerk makes strong appeal to election spoilers

CAPE TOWN (AFP) — President F.W. De Klerk Monday urged conservative black and white parties to turn their backs on plans to boycott and violently disrupt South Africa's democratic election in April.

Opening a special session of parliament here, Mr. De Klerk said that the conservatives, grouped in the Freedom Alliance, had no reason to boycott the vote if legislators approved a package of amendments to the constitution.

"There is simply no future on the road of unconstitutional and violent activity," Mr. De Klerk said. 'I appeal to any of those who might be considering this road to turn back before it is too late."

The three-day sitting of parliament was called to rubber-stamp amendments to the interim constitution, approved last Monday by the negotiating council, the multi-party body that last year drew up the new basic law.

The changes form an eleventh-hour attempts to draw the Freedom Alliance into the April 26-28 election.

The alliance — the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the white right-wing Afrikaner Voksfront (AVF) and Bophuthatswana black homeland — have rejected the constitution and various alliance leaders have warned of civil strife if the election proceeds.

Mr. De Klerk said he suspected that the alliance's problem was not with the constitution, "but with the broader realities of our timer.'

He said it was a reality that whites were a minority and that all South Africans were economically linked.

The government, Mr. De Klerk said, "dare not allow any minority to deprive the great majority of South Africans of their long-awaited desire to elect national and provincial governments."

He said the security forces had a "long and proud tradition of loyal service to the government of the day."

The international community, too, would not support a return to "minority racial domination and racial discrimination."

"There can be no return to apartheid," Mr. De Klerk said.

The white-dominated parliament is expected to adopt the amendments, which allow for increased federal powers for South Africa's nine new provinces and provide for voters to use separate ballots for provincial and national assemblies.

A parliamentary body will also be set up to investigate the feasibility of establishing the white homeland being demanded by right-wingers.

Fake priest held after 12 years of giving mass

BOGOTA, Colombia (R) — Colombian police have arrested a man who for 12 years gave mass, baptised babies and married couples as a priest but was actually a fake, the television news programme TV Hoy reported Sunday. After a local bishop complained, police arrested Hipolito Sastre as he was giving mass in a church near the Mariquita, over 100 kilometres northwest of Bogota, the programme said. It said the bishop denounced Sastre to police when he learned of the unusual ways he was giving mass and asking people for donations. But Sastre, who was never ordained as a priest, remained unrepentant. "I'm with God," he told a reporter, "if Jesus went to jail for spreading the Gospel, then I will too." The programme said Sastre had worked in nearly all of the country's provinces throughout his fraudulent years as a priest and had married more than one hundred couples. The local bishop called on all those who were married by Sastre to take their vows again before a proper priest.

Japanese suit men eye aprons

TOKYO (R) — Japanese men, long conditioned to putting their jobs before their home lives, have become more willing to help their wives with domestic tasks, according to a survey. Asked how they felt about helping look after, discipline and educate children — traditionally considered women's work in Japan — 88 per cent of men in the survey replied "positively" or "positively to an extent." Ninety per cent gave these replies when asked about looking after elderly parents. The survey was carried out last October by the prime minister's office and canvassed 3,000 people aged 20 or older, of whom 71 per cent responded. Three-quarters of those responding said men should switch from a lifestyle centred on work, and 72 per cent said that compared with a few years ago men had already shifted their focus towards family life. But the survey also showed limits to men's interest in home life and a differences in attitudes between generations. Fourteen per cent of men in their 20s and just five per cent of those in their 30s or older said home was more important than work. "I feel the notion that men work outside and women stay at home is gradually eroding among men," said Mariko Bando, chief of the Women's Affairs Section of the prime minister's office, according to Kyodo News Agency. "But it will take time before men's words are put into practice," she said.

Briton has surrogate triplets for sister-in-law

LONDON (R) — A British woman has given birth to triplets in a surrogate birth for her sister-in-law, the Mail On Sunday newspaper reported. The two boys and a girl were born six weeks early to Dawn Spindler using the eggs of her sister-in-law Debbie Riley and the sperm of Debbie's husband Eddy. The children, born 10 days ago, are Britain's first surrogate triplets. "Dawn has known that the babies are genetically ours from the start and has taken a detached approach knowing they were not hers to keep," Debbie, 30, told the Mail On Sunday. Debbie had a hysterectomy 10 years ago and the couple had tried every year since 1988 to have a surrogate child. An earlier attempt in 1992 using Dawn's womb failed. Dawn, 29, has two children of her own and is married to Debbie's brother. In 1987 the Mail On Sunday broke the news that 48-year-old Pat Anthony, a South African grandmother, had given birth to triplets in a surrogate birth for her daughter.

Former Queen guitarist's tapes stolen

LONDON (AP) — Burglars broke into the West London home of former Queen guitarist Brian May and snatched cassette tapes bearing "work in progress," police said Sunday. The intruders forced open the front door and grabbed a briefcase containing a personal organiser, a camera, a wallet, dollars, two passports and the cassette tapes, a police spokesman said, requesting anonymity. May reported the break-in when he returned home shortly after midnight.

Ulster unionists to boycott peace talks

BELFAST (AFP) — The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) said Monday it would boycott fresh Ulster peace talks with Britain and Ireland, seen as a setback to British Prime Minister John Major's strategy for peace in Northern Ireland.

The announcement said the party would remain out of the talks until new political structures were set up in the Northern province.

Observers believed the talks would be doomed without the participation of the moderate UUP, the main unionist party, after the hardline Democratic Unionists led by Ian Paisley had already refused to take part.

Mr. Major and Northern Ireland Secretary Sir Patrick Mayhew had been keen to resume the talks as a means of demonstrating to Sinn Fein, political wing of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), that the peace process could continue without it.

At its annual congress in Dublin on the weekend, Sinn Fein failed to either accept or reject the Dec. 15 Anglo-Irish joint declaration which offered it a place in negotiations once the IRA had renounced violence for three months.

Announcing what it termed a "blueprint for stability" at a Belfast news conference, the UUP proposed a devolved assembly in Northern Ireland to provide accountable democracy.

The assembly, it said, would arrange new relationships with Dublin.

"This is a positive proposal to build from the bottom up, not from the top down," said party Chairman Jim Nicholson.

Earlier Monday Ulster Unionist MP David Trimble accused Sir Patrick of "breaking the ground rules" for talks by sending proposals to the Irish government without consulting the UUP.

Mr. Trimble said he was "extremely angry" that Sir Patrick had not "come clear," about his approach to Dublin.

"For that reason, we are making it clear to Sir Patrick that we are not interested in the resumption of talks on this basis," he said.

He said the UUP went along with the Downing Street Declaration but had been "putting out feelers in other directions."

"We are being held to ransom literally by everyone," while the IRA are being allowed to get away with murder," said Mr. Trimble.

Moldovan independence party ahead in polls

KISHINYOV (R) — Moldova's main pro-independence party strongly outpolled nationalists calling for reunification with Romania in Sunday's parliamentary election, Moldovan Radio said Monday.

It quoted partial unofficial results as giving the Agrarian Democratic Party (ADP), which seek to preserve the former Soviet republic's independence, 49 per cent of votes in northern regions of the country.

The nationalist Popular Front, main advocate of a merger with neighbouring Romania, was third with only seven per cent. Moldova, once a Romanian province, was annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940.

The radio said the returns were obtained from local constituences, Moldova's Central Electoral Commission has not yet issued any official information.

A senior ADP official, who declined to be identified, told Reuters returns from the north generally reflected the trend throughout the country.

In spite of a strong showing in voting for the 104-seat legislature, the ADP appeared to be short of a majority.

Another party official said it was most likely to seek cooperation with the pro-Russian Socialist Party, which unexpectedly came second in the north with 23 per cent of votes.

The Socialist Party, whose main support is among Moldova's Russian-speaking population, generally shares the programme of the ADP. But it seeks stronger links with Russia and calls for incorporation of the republic into Moscow's rouble zone.

Drug abuse is becoming 'globalised' — U.N. report

VIENNA (AFP) — The last two decades have seen a "globalisation" of drug abuse and a dramatic increase in the economic power and political influence of drug cartels, the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board said in its annual report.

It said that increasingly governments were coming to realise that international cooperation in drug control "has now become a matter of urgent self-defence."

Distinctions between supplier and consumer countries were becoming meaningless as "consumer countries have become supplier countries and vice versa". Transit countries too "are quickly becoming consumer countries and may also become supplier countries."

It called for more efforts from governments to reduce demand for drugs. Particularly among young people.

But while legislation could help curb trafficking. It said "demand reduction methods however cannot be 'standardised' by legal documents."

The report came out strongly against legalising drugs used by abusers. "The legalisation of any drug of abuse leads necessarily to increased availability of that drug. This is one of the reasons for the strong position of the board against such experiments," the report said.

It criticised Italy, which repealed prohibition of non-medical drugs last June, urging it to "remedy the situation". However, it praised Portugal and Spain for passing legislation aimed at tightening measures against drug abuse.

The report said drug trafficking syndicates were involved increasingly in "other forms of organised and violent crime" and were taking advantage of countries affected by "civil war, terrorist activities, political instability, ethnic conflict, economic depression or social tensions" to expand their activities.

Despite efforts by many countries to curb money laundering, "Much more needs to be done," the report said. "Drug traffickers seek out countries and territories with weak central banks, restrictive bank secrecy practices and limited controls on foreign exchange," the report said.

The report reminded governments that the 1988 U.N. Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances" calls for relaxation of bank secrecy requirements in cases involving drug trafficking, including drug-related money-laundering."

In Europe, the report said Central and Eastern European countries, notably Poland, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria had become new transit for traffickers.

In the former Soviet Union "the rise in criminality in Belarus, The Russian Federation and Ukraine is associated with drug trafficking," and drug traffickers from these countries "are expanding their operations, often via Poland to countries in Central and Western Europe."

Turkey remained the main entry point for heroin smuggled to Europe from Western Asia and most cocaine came to Europe through Spain and Portugal.

The report said cannabis was "the main drug of abuse in Europe" and its use in the formerly Communist states "has been increasing."

"Whereas in the United States, the number of cannabis abuses has decreased in the last few years, no such trend has emerged in Europe," the report said.

Market reforms in the former Communist Bloc had left many qualified chemists out of a job. These chemists had turned their talents to making drugs and psychostropic substances, the report said.

"In Bulgaria, state-owned companies were engaged in the manufacture of amphetamines and amphetamine derivatives, including Fenetylline" which had been exported to Gulf states "without authorisation."

The report said there had been a "substantial increase in the illicit manufacture" of Methylenedioxymethamphetamine or "Ecstacy" notably in the Netherlands, Hungary and Latvia.

In Africa, abuse of cannabis "has become endemic" with most of it coming from Morocco, Nigeria and Zaire. But there were signs that "cannabis cultivation is increasing.... mainly in Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda and Zambia."

"In many African countries, due to inadequate health-care service, the majority of pharmaceutical preparations are not prescribed by physicians," and drugs were "commonly procured without consulting medical personnel". It was "practically impossible to distinguish between the use and abuse of pharmaceuticals", the report said.

In Central America, economic recession and unemployment have led to a rise in drug-related crimes, the report said while in South America, Colombia was still the world's biggest producer of cocaine.

Most of the world's heroin originated in Asia's "golden triangle" and in Pakistan, the report said.

South Korea which was formerly a transit country had seen "an unprecedented number of heroin abuse cases" in 1992 and 1993. Taiwan "also seems to be on its way to becoming an area in which heroin is abused."

There had also been "a significant increase in cocaine seizures in Hong Kong, Japan, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea," the report said.

U.K. floats new plan to bind Russia to West

WASHINGTON (R) — Britain urgently wants the West to strengthen political and strategic links with Moscow to help Russian President Boris Yeltsin repel growing threats to his democratic reforms, British officials said Sunday.

They said Prime Minister John Major, who flew into Washington Sunday evening, would press President Bill Clinton to back closer ties between Russia and NATO and include Moscow in the political work of the group of seven industrial nations.

Mr. Major believes the West must act swiftly to bolster reformers after the Russian parliament Saturday ordered the release of the leaders of last September's attempted coup against Mr. Yeltsin — former Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi and parliamentary speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov.

"There's a major prize to be had in relations with Russia, binding it within the international democratic community," a senior official told reporters aboard Mr. Major's plane.

"This is a requirement that bears upon us even more strongly after the events of the past few days," he added.

Russia has not yet responded to an invitation that leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) extended last month to former Communist countries to join a post-cold war Partnership For Peace (PFP) with the Western military alliance.

Ten former Warsaw Pact states have accepted the offer of joint exercises and cooperation with NATO as a stepping stone to full membership, and Mr. Major will encourage Moscow — which has been extremely cool to the idea — to follow suit.

But he will tell Mr. Clinton that, given Russia's standing as a nuclear power, it should be offered a special status.

"We're quite prepared to see something over and above that (a PFP deal), the senior official said.

The official did not give details of the British proposal, but he was confident it would appeal to the United States.

NEWS IN BRIEF

20 killed in Kashmir on weekend

NEW DELHI (AFP) — At least 20 people, including 10 Muslim rebels, were killed during a bloody weekend in the troubled northern Indian state of Kashmir, the Press Trust of India reported Monday. Ten militants died in separate shootouts with the Indian security forces in the state Sunday, a government spokesman told the news agency in the Kashmir summer capital Srinagar. Ten civilians including three women and a retired policeman were shot dead by separatists over the weekend, he said.

Australia loses 3rd minister

CANBERRA (R) — Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating Monday lost his third cabinet member in three months when Environment and Sports Minister Ros Kelly resigned over an Australian dollar 30 million ($21.5 million) sports funding row. Ms. Kelly, a close ally of Mr. Keating, quit after a parliamentary committee dominated by her own Labour Party said she mismanaged a funding programme for community sports and recreation organisations before the general election won by Labour last March. "...Her record-keerping was seriously inadequate and...her administration was deficient," the committee's Labour Chairman John Langmore told parliament Monday shortly before Mr. Keating announced her departure. Government sources said Mr. Keating planned to replace Ms. Kelly with Carmen Lawrence, the popular former Labour premier of Western Australia, who will enter federal politics if she wins a by-election on March 12.

Fiji president calls for racial unity

SUVA, Fiji (R) — Fijian President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara swore in Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka for a second term Monday and called for the divisions in this racially split South Pacific nation to be healed. "It is time for reconciliation and healing," President Mara said at a press conference at Government House in the capital Suva. "There are some who still believe our nation of many races, cultures and faiths is doomed to fail," he said. "As your chosen government takes office, let us once more show the naysayers the depth and strength of this country and our determination to find common ground for a common future." In 1987, Mr. Rabuka led a military coup that overthrew the Indian-dominated government of Dr. Timoci Bavarda, claiming indigenous Fijians were losing control of their country. An interim government of indigenous Fijians subsequently introduced a racially-biased constitution in 1990 guaranteeing native Fijians a majority of 37 seats in the 70-seat parliament. Fiji's population is made up of 47 per cent indigenous Fijians, 45 per cent Fiji Indians and eight per cent other races.

Fire kills 9 in U.S.

BALTIMORE, Maryland (AFP) — A fire sparked by candles used to light a home where electricity had been cut off killed seven children and two adults, fire officials said Sunday. Electricity was cut off at the Baltimore Row House in November for failure to pay a bill of more than $1,000, said a spokesman for Baltimore Gas and Electric. City fire Captain Paul Geoghegan said the blaze started late Saturday in a downstairs living room by candles left burning beside a sofa where a 14-year-old boy was sleeping. There was no smoke detector. The boy escaped along with a woman who dropped her two-year-old son to safety and then leapt out of the house herself from a second-floor window. She suffered a broken ankle. The dead children, ranging in age from eight months to 12 years, were found upstairs crouched on the floor or under clothes and blankets. The victims' names were not released.

China's population hits 1.185 billion

BEIJING (AFP) — China's population grew by 13.46 million last year to hit 1.185 billion people, the State Statistical Bureau said Monday. The birth rate in the world's most populous nation stood at 18.09 per thousand in 1993 while the death rate was 6.64 per thousand, resulting in a natural growth rate of 11.45 per thousand, the bureau revealed in its annual report.

هكذا من الأصل

Graf wins Evert Cup

INDIAN WELLS, California (R) — Top seeded Steffi Graf of Germany continued her domination of women's tennis by beating sixth-seeded Amanda Coetzer of South Africa 6-0 6-4 in 57 minutes to win the $400,000 Evert Cup Sunday.

Graf, who has not lost a set in 17 matches this year, captured her third title of 1994. In January, the top-ranked Graf won the Australian Open, the first Grand Slam event of the year.

Graf earned $80,000 for her fourth consecutive win in as many matches over Coetzer, while Coetzer collected $36,000.

Graf dominated the first set, dropping only four points on her serve, and took a 1-0 lead over Coetzer in the second set, without allowing the South African baseliner to find any rhythm on her groundstrokes, her strong suit.

Coetzer, 16 in the world, held her serve for 1-1 and the crowd cheered loudly in hopes that the match would become more competitive, but Graf kept Coetzer pinned to the baseline and took a 5-2 lead.

As Graf seemed to lose concentration, Coetzer brought the set back on serve to 4-5 when she broke Graf in the ninth game with a backhand passing shot, but Graf hit two powerful forehands to unnerve Coetzer and close out the match.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Stich moves back up

MONACO (AFP) — Germany's Michael Stich bounced back to second spot in the world tennis rankings published here Monday after his tournament win in Rotterdam. That victory pushed Jim Courier and Stefan Edberg down a place each. Dutchman Paul Haarhuis, meanwhile, continued his rise. The doubles specialist moved to 21st place after his Philadelphia final appearance, allowing him to overtake compatriot Richard Krajicek. Andre Agassi is just outside the top 30, moving from 32nd to 31st after his comeback tournament win at Scottsdale.

Injury forces Harding out of bout

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The World Boxing Council has ordered an interim light heavyweight championship fight after learning that defending champion Jeff Harding of Australia will be unable to defend his title because of an eye injury. Harding suffered a cut above his left eye while sparring last week and will be unable to defend his title Friday night against Randall Yonker, according to Don King Productions, which is promoting a five-fight title card at the MGM Grand Hotel. Instead, the WBC has ordered an interim light heavyweight championship fight between Yonker, of the United States, and three-time former champion Mike McCallum, also American. The winner will fight Harding at a date to be determined. For both legal and medical reasons, Harding has not defended his title for more than 14 months.

Olympic skating coach quits

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Peter Mueller, the choice of Dan Jansen and Bunnie Blair as U.S. Olympic speedskating coach, said Sunday he is quiting because he's "just fed up with a lot of things." Mueller was quoted by the Milwaukee Sentinel in Oslo, Norway, as saying he decided not to wait for a new contract from U.S. speedskating. "People in positions of power aren't helping the skaters and I'm tired of dealing with them," he said. His contract expires at the end of April. He declined to say which officials displeased him. "When you get results, you're not appreciated," he told the Sentinel. "You would think that, after the past three years, that they would want to have you. I love speedskating. It has been my life, but I don't need these people." Mueller, 39, of suburban Mequon, is a three-time Olympic medal winner. He was hired as U.S. Olympic team coach and U.S. national coach three years ago at the recommenation of Jansen, Blair and other skaters who practiced at a state fairgrounds rink in Milwaukee.

Olympic organisers annoyed by advertisement

LILLEHAMMER (R) — Olympic organisers said Monday they were annoyed by an unauthorised advertisement for a Norwegian soft drink which appeared in twinkling lights during the games closing ceremony. The lights, spelling the word "solo," flashed on and off across the Lillehammer valley during a spectacular ceremony televised live around the world Sunday night. Organisers said the company that makes and markets the orange soft drink, the second most popular brand in Norway, was not one of the games sponsors. "That's the problem and that's the reason," said games spokesman Odd Ustad. "That was ambush marketing, of course." But the company, Solo A/S, denied it was behind the display. The Norwegian newspaper Dagbladet said two men unconnected with the company had devised the scheme and switched on the lights whenever they were in view of the television cameras. It quoted Akse Prestesaeter as saying he and his friend Hogne Hoestmaelingen decided to use the lights as a protest against the Olympics drinks sponsor, an American cola company. There was no immediate comment from the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The IOC and a major sponsor reacted angrily during the games to an advertising campaign by a rival credit card company. Olympic sponsors invest millions of dollars in the games and jealously guard their exclusive advertising rights.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A52 ♡J532 ◇EJ52 ♣A7
The bidding has proceeded:

South	West	North	East
1 ◇	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
?			

What do you bid now?

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠EQ107643 ♡Q975 ◇Void ♣93
The bidding has proceeded:

North	East	South	West
1 ♠	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 NT	Pass	?	

What do you bid now?

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠10542 ♡J52 ◇J ♣AQJ102
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AKQ82 ♡A72 ◇AQ105 ♣7
The bidding has proceeded:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	2 ♣	Pass	Pass
?			

What action do you take?

Q.5—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠J1042 ♡K ◇1054 ♣J8743
Partner opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.6—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠762 ♡K105 ◇832 ♣A985
The bidding has proceeded:

North	East	South	West
1 ◇	Pass	1 NT	Pass
2 ♡	Pass	?	

What do you bid now?

Al Jazireh set to retain women's basketball title

By Aleen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — 1994 promises to be a very active year for the Kingdom's women's basketball champions — Al Jazireh — who have set a full schedule of tournaments that are bound to keep them quite busy and more than ready to retain their title.

Realising that the Jordan Basketball Federation's (JBF) yearly women's championship would not satisfy any team's needs, Al Jazireh have announced that they will be organising an international women's basketball championship in addition to playing in neighbouring countries and hosting teams throughout the season.

"We are now thinking global. We can advance our standard only by playing against more experienced teams," Al Jazireh's head coach Fadi Sabbah told the Jordan Times.

Jordan's women's champions commenced their season last month when they played a series of matches in Aleppo, Syria. They met league leaders Al Horriyeh, runners-up Al Yarmouk and Al Jala'.

They will next play Lebanese champions Homentmen, and runners-up Al Hikmeh during the Ramadan holiday in anticipation of the Kingdom's championship scheduled for April in which they will face former champions Al Orthodoxi.

However, their crowning event will be the international championship due to begin July 20.

According to Sabbah, four teams have already informed Al Jazireh of their participation. They are: Syria's Al Jala', Lebanon's Homentmen, Bethlehem's Al Catholic and Kefalovrysos of Cyprus.

It will be the first time a woman's basketball championship is organised on a large scale. Since the JBF only has one yearly championship which is usually concluded in two or three weeks, the few women's teams usually have to host Arab and foreign teams to give players an incentive and keep them busy throughout the season.

Players now hope that the newly formed JBF will give more attention to women's teams, especially the national team which last competed in 1983 when women's basketball competitions were put on hold for over six years.

Since then, the former JBF announced the regrouping of the women's team in Dec. 92. However players are still awaiting for practice to begin someday!

Women's basketball began its latest comeback in the 1989-90 season when three teams, Al Orthodoxi, Al Ahli, and Homentmen competed in the championship which was won by Al Orthodoxi.

In 1991, Al Jazireh joined the women's championship and finished fourth after the three aforementioned teams.

In the 1992 competition, Al Jazireh clinched third place from Homentmen, and in 1993 defied expectations by clinching the title away from Al Orthodoxi.

Therefore, the pressure is now on the newly crowned champions to retain their title and possibly represent the Kingdom in the Arab clubs' championship.

The team is scheduled to play their final tournament of the year in Cyprus in October.

Agassi beats Mattar to win Arizona title

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (R) — Andre Agassi, two months after undergoing wrist surgery, overcame a sluggish start to beat Luiz Mattar of Brazil 6-4 6-3 to win the Arizona men's tennis championships Sunday.

"I was happy with the way I got through it," said Agassi, who defended his title and collected the winner's check of $42,000.

"It's been a long road for me, and I knew it was going to be very difficult coming back," said Agassi, who swept past five opponents without losing a set. "To have a rusty performance and win in straight sets is impressive for me.

"I did not anticipate to come in here to win the tournament, and feel like I can beat anyone in the world," said Agassi, 23. "And right now I do. I feel I'm ready to play the biggest players in the biggest matches. I'm looking forward to it.

"I don't think by any means I played my best tennis," the fifth seeded Agassi said about his 20th career title. "But there's no question I was definitely pushed. If he'd gotten the right points at the right times, we'd still be fighting it out."

Mattar was bidding to become the first Brazilian to win an ATP tour title outside of his native country.

Mattar broke in his first two services but could not keep it up as Agassi began to find the mark with his seering groundstrokes.

After levelling the first set at 4-4 with a service break, Agassi held for 5-4 before the Brazilian double-faulted at set point.

Beardsley back in England frame

LONDON (AFP) — Peter Beardsley was recalled to the England fold here Monday as new coach Terry Venables rang the changes.

But fellow veteran international Chris Waddle was left out of the selection to play Denmark March 9.

Venables immediately wielded the axe to get rid of goalkeeper Chris Woods, midfielder Carlton Palmer, fullback Lee Dixon and midfielder Andy Sinton, who all featured in former boss Graham Taylor's sides.

Instead he turned to young bloods Matthew le Tissier, Darren Anderton and Blackburn's Graeme le Saux.

Lillehammer Olympics hard act to follow, Japanese say

LILLEHAMMER, Norway (Agenices) — The Japanese organisers of the 1998 Winter Olympics have one big worry: Lillehammer will be a hard act to follow.

"I don't think any other country could do as well as Norway does in filling the stadiums with people, Yush Ro Yagi, secretary of Japan's Ski Association, has said.

But Nagano Mayor Tasuku Tsukada said after receiving the Olympic flag at Lillehammer's closing ceremonies: "I'm sure the Nagno Olympics will be wonderful games like those in Lillehammer."

Tsukada said a parade was planned in Nagano Wednesday to celebrate the flag's arrival. Some 10,000 Nagano citizens were expected to work as volunteers for the 1988 winter games, he added, and Japan has had previous experience as host for the 1964 summer games and 1972 Winter Olympics.

In Lillehammer, the crowds of thousands of cheering, flag-waving, cowbell-clanging Norwegians "made a positive mood, so we could avoid becoming nervous," said Manabu Horii, a bronze medallist for Japan in men's 500-metre speedskating.

"I hope at Nagano, the people will cheer us as the Norwegians cheered us," Horii said.

Yagi added, "in the Scandinavian countries, especially in Norway, skiing is the national sport. I'm very concerned about what the situation will be in Nagano. I'm going to work on it, but I'm very concerned."

Nobody expects the Japanese to match Norway's no. 1 finish in the medals standings here. But Yagi hopes for a good showing.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch has said the success of the Olympics "depends on how well the host country does, how they compete," Yagi noted. "So we feel we have to make the Japanese athletes do well."

Japan finished 10th in the Lillehammer medals race with one gold, two silvers and two bronzes.

Language also is a problem in Japan, unlike in Norway, where most people speak English Tsukada acknowledged.

"In Japan, people are studying English and other foreign languages. We would like to invite them to come work as volunteers," he said.

Finances were not a major worry when Nagano was planning its bid to be the next winter games host. But since it was selected in 1991, Japan's economy has been in recession, leading to fears of corporate donations drying up.

Tsukada said the economy was expected to turn up gradually starting this fall, and the Nagano Olympics "will be all right."

Makoto Kobayashi, the committee's-general, said earlier that negotiations over U.S. television rights were very encouraging, with a basic agreement already reached for CBS to pay $375 million. The original budget envisioned $247 million in overall television revenues.

Environmental groups also have been keeping a close watch on Olympic construction. Nagano organisers still are negotiating with ski authorities over the layout of downhill race courses, trying to keep them from encroaching on a nature preserve in a Japanese national park.

Kobayashi said the International Ski Federation wanted the starting point for the downhill courses moved higher to make them more challenging.

The biathlon course already had been moved because construction at the originally planned location would have disrupted the habitat of goshawks, birds that are protected by international agreement.

With the scenic Japan Alps in the distance, Nagano is a city of 350,000 people. In contrast, Lillehammer, is a rural town of 23,000.

Tsukada noted that while Lillehammer is the northernmost of the Winter Olympic host cities, Nagano will be the southernmost.

Nagano's attractions include one of Japan's best-known Buddhist temples, whose main hall is the largest thatched-roof building in the nation.

After the far-flung winter games of 1992 centered in Albertville, France, Lillehammer brought all the sites close together. In Japan, the venues will be spread out around Nagano, with curling 75 kilometres away and some of the Alpine ski slopes 62 kilometres fom the Olympic village. Curling competitors will be housed in Karuizawa, a favourite resort for Tokyo residents.

On Sunday little Lillehammer bade a proud farewell to the "best Olympic Winter Games ever" on with a sparkling closing ceremony tinged by sadness for the shattered Olympic city of Sarajevo.

A 40,000 crowd, and an estimated two billion television viewers worldwide, watched as the Norwegians handed on the Olympic baton to the city of Nagano.

Winners and losers from 16 days of top-level competition, carrying the flags of 67 countries, streamed into the Olympic ski jump arena for the final show.

But before the fireworks, and a long night of celebration, Olympic leaders recalled the shattered host city of 1984 — and even claimed some credit fo the current truce in Bosnia.

The 80-minute show was less formal but no less spectacular than the icily haunting display put on by the Norwegians to open the games Feb. 12.

Though Norway's rich folk culture and its eternal battle with the forces of nature were again to the fore, the closing ceremony showed a little more of the human touch that had made the coldest ever winter games so special for the fans.

Lillehammer's green-white message was not forgotten. Town Mayor Audun Tron sent off a six-strong team of dog sledders on a 18-month-journey across Siberia to deliver an environmental message to the organisers of Nagano.

After Samaranch's formal closing declaration, came the main artistic part of the show. Giant trolls and evil nordic sprites stalked the stage and the arena was bathed in a forest of light.

And 40,000 flashlights, each of them inscribed 'remember Sarajevo' were pointed to the sky to remind the world of the horrors of the Bosnian war.

But the evening belonged to the people of Lillehammer, whom Samaranch described as "the real winners of these magic games."

EUROPEAN SOCCER ROUNDUP

Barcelona apply pressure to defeat Deportivo

PARIS (AFP) — Barcelona, who play Spartak Moscow in the European champions cup Wednesday, refused to take their foot off the accelerator and were rewarded with an impressive 3-0 victory over leaders Deportivo la Coruna in the eagerly-awaited top-of-the-table Spanish first division clash Saturday.

Barcelona, showed that whatever happens to them in the European Cup competition, they have by no means given up hope of winning a fourth consecutive league title.

The home side's 'foreign legion' did the damage and took their chances.

Bulgarian Hristo Stoichkov opened the scoring by lobbing Liano with a superb header midway through the first half and seven minutes later Brazilian frontrunner Romario found space by the far post to latch onto a Stoichkov cross.

Denmark's forward Michael Laudrup, who came on for Stoichov in the second-half, put the match beyond doubt twelve minutes from time after chasing through on a defensive error by Nando.

Barcelona's latest victory had their delighted Dutch manager Johan Cruyff confidently predicting:

With twelve games left to play Deportivo has 38 points and Barcelona have joined Real Madrid on 34.

Real Madrid did themselves no favours by dropping a point in a tame 1-1 home draw against Tenerife.

In Italy, where no fewer than six clubs will be playing in midweek European Cup matches, pacesetters AC Milan had to wait until the second-half to find their form against Foggia.

They eventually clinched a 2-1 win but they had to see out some anxious late moments in fron of 70,000 fans inside the San Siro stadium when the visitors sparked a late revival.

The Milan scorers were Zvonimir Boban and Daniele Massaro while Igor Kolyvanov of Russia pulled one back on the hour. Foggia finished with ten men when Luigi di Baggio was went off in dying seconds for a second yellow card.

Kolyvanov's goal also produced a little bit of history. Until he scored, Milan goalkeeper Sebastiano Rossi had not been beaten in 929 minutes of football.

The previous invincibility record for a goalkeeper was the 903 minutes set by Dino Zoff in 1973.

Milan will return to the San Siro Stadium Wednesday for their European Champions League showdown with German champions Werder Bremen.

European 'player-of-the-year' Roberto Baggio snapped up two goals for Juventus in their 3-1 win over relegation-threatened Atlanta, extending his league tally for the season to 16.

Juventus, who are still six points behind AC Milan with nine games to go, play Cagliari in an away-leg UEFA Cup quarter-final Tuesday.

Cagliari came away 2-1 winners from Napoli — Oliveira scoring both their goals.

Sampdoria, without Ruud Gullit who put the side into the Italian Cup final in midweek, kept up with Juventus by beating AS Roma 1-0 through a Roberto Mancini goal. But England's David Platt got another booking.

Parma, who are away to Ajax of Amsterdam in the European Cup Winners Cup Thursday, beat Cremonese 2-1 to stay fourth and Paul Gascoigne's Lazio won 2-1 at Piacenza to keep fifth spot.

Torino beat Inter Milan 2-0 and the result means that neither team will finish high enough for a UEFA Cup place next season.

Both clubs, however, will be on European duty in the next week.

Torino are at home to England's Arsenal in the cup winners cup while Inter Milan are away to Borussia Dortmund in the UEFA cup.

In Germany, where five clubs are still chasing European trophies, Franz Beckenbauer's magic is clearly beginning to work on Bayern Munich. They hammered MSV Duisburg 4-0 and knocked the visitors off the top of the table.

A committed Bayern, rotating their game around sweeper Lothar Matthaus, went on a first-half goal spree, scoring all their goals before the break to stun Ewald Lienen's newly-promoted side.

The weekend's big losers were Eintracht Frankfurt, who entertained lowly Schalke and crashed 1-3. A goal by Ghanaian striker Anthony Yeboah, just back from serious injury, was the only consolation for Frankfurt who are away to Austrian opponents Casino Salzburg in the UEFA Cup next Thursday.

Werder Bremen got ready for their Milan trip by salvaging a 2-2 home draw against Nuremburg, while Bayer Leverkusen, who face Benfica away in the European Cup Winners Cup, shared the points with a 1-1 result at Cologne.

The other German side travelling to Portugal in midweek, SC Karlsruhe, also struggled to come away with a goalless draw from second-placed Kaiserlautern. They will play Boavista in the UEFA Cup.

Boavista beat visiting Pacos Ferreira 2-0 while Benfica were held 0-0 at Farense.

In France, Marseille missed a golden chance to close the gap on first division leaders Paris St. Germain.

PSG, who travel to Real Madrid for a first-leg cup winners' cup clash Thursday, were lucky to extend their unbeaten sequence to 23 matches when they salvaged an away point in a goalless draw at Auxerre.

But it was good engough to keep them five points clear of Marseille, who are also held 0-0 at Metz.

PSG now have 43 points from 28 matches.

PSG and Marseille were not the only clubs to draw. Four other fixtures ended in deadlock.

Lille were held 1-1 at home by Bordeaux. Lyon finished 2-2 against visiting Cannes. Caen and Nantes went 90 minutes without a goal and Angers held Monaco, who play Galatasaray in the European Champions League Wednesday, 1-1.

China accepts ban on star

BEIJING (R) — China's national sports association said Monday that swimmer Zhong Weiyue deserved a two-year ban after failing a drug test.

On Saturday the International Swimming Federation (FINA) imposed the ban after she tested positive for doping.

A brief statement issued after a FINA meeting said Zhong's 50 metre and 100 metre short course world records would not stand.

"At the swimming World Cup event held in Beijing in January 1994, the swimmer Zhong Weiyue was found positive at the doping control test," the statement said.

"FINA suspended her for a period of two years and the world records she established in 50m and 100m butterfly were not approved," the statement added.

Zhong stunned the swimming world with her two records.

A national sports association spokesman said Zhong had told them she had taken medicine because she was feeling ill.

"No matter what the reason she took the drug, she should be banned," he told Reuters. "We must strictly observe the rules of FINA." He made no further comment.

FINA gave no details of what drug Zhong, 18, had taken.

She set her now discredited world best times on successive days, clocking 26.44 seconds in the 50 metres butterfly to shave 0.49 seconds of Australian Angela Kennedy's time and 58.71 in the 100 metres to break a 12-year-old record by American Mary Meagher.

The governing body of the sport in Australia, Australian Swimming, urged FINA to introduce immediate random testing.

Executive Director Simon Allatson siad in Sydney the credibility of this year's world championships in Rome in September would be seriously undermined unless tougher action was taken against drug use.

"Swimmers must have a semblance of confidence that the swimmers they will compete against in Rome are not using drugs as part of their preparation programme," said Allatson.

Allatson said FINA agreed in principle to random testing in 1992 but had not yet implemented the programme.

He said it had been invited to conduct tests during the run-up to Australia's Commonwealth Games trials in Brisbane next month.

At present swimmers are only tested during competition.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Greek minister tours Mideast after attack

AMMAN (R) — Greek Foreign Minister Carlos Papoulias will arrive in Jordan Wednesday as part of a regional tour to discuss Middle East peace after the Hebron mosque massacre, officials said on Monday. Mr. Papoulias, whose country chairs the European Union, will fly into Amman from Tunis after talks with Palestine Liberation Organisation chief Yasser Arafat. He is scheduled to meet King Hussein and other Jordanian officials during his 24-hour stay.

Bhutto's husband cleared of fraud charge

KARACHI (R) — A Pakistani court on Monday cleared Asif Ali Zardari, husband of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, of bank-fraud charges in the last of 13 cases filed against him when his wife was ousted as premier in 1990. "I feel great," Mr. Zardari told Reuters by telephone from his home in Islamabad. "Eventually I have proved to the world that they were wrong and I was right." Mr. Zardari had been accused of using his influence to obtain a loan of 63.6 million rupees ($2.1 million) for a friend from the state-run United Bank Limited while Ms. Bhutto was prime minister from 1988 to 1990. "In my considered opinion I find the case unfounded and the evidence baseless.. even if the case is further proceeded, my opinion is that nothing will come out against the accused," said Judge Rashid Rizvi of the special court for banking offences.

King Fahd offers $50,000 to Hebron families

RIYADH (AFP) — King Fahd is to give 200,000 riyals (more than $53,000) to the families of every Palestinian killed last Friday during and after the Hebron massacre and will fly the seriously wounded to Saudi hospitals, an official spokesman said here Monday. The king decided to make the gesture "to ease the suffering of relatives of those martyred in the vile massacre... and of those shot dead afterwards by the Israeli army," the spokesman said. Hospital planes would bring the seriously wounded to Saudi civilian and military hospitals, in coordination with the PLO. The spokesman said the massacre was "the most disgusting crime committed against humanity."

Immigrants protest in Brussels

BRUSSELS (R) — Young pro-Palestinian immigrants protested in central Brussels on Sunday following a memorial rally for victims of the Hebron mosque massacre, police said. "There were some very serious incidents with quite a lot of damage," Brussels Police commissioner Pierre van Doorslaer told Reuters. He said demonstrators hurled stones and bottles at police, damaged dozens of cars, including police vehicles, and smashed many shop windows in Brussels' main shopping area. Seven or eight people were arrested but no one was injured, he said. There were no immediate reports of looting. He said police stopped some of the youths when they marched to the Jewish museum in the Belgian capital.

Drunk Iranian judge tangles with police

TEHRAN (AFP) — A judge got into a drunken scuffle with police when they arrested him for drinking alcohol in northwestern Iran, the daily Jomhuri Islamic reported Monday. Alcoholic drinks were also found in his car after he was caught having a binge with a court employee in the Pars-Abad region near the border with Azerbaijan. Iran has strictly enforced the ban on alcohol since the 1979 revolution, although locally-produced and imported alcoholic drinks are widely available on the black market.

Three acquitted in Sudan coup plot

KHARTOUM (R) — A Sudanese court has dismissed all changes against three of 12 people on trial since December in charges of plotting to overthrow the government, newspapers said on Monday. The court ruled that prosecution evidence was not sufficient for a conviction. Al Sudan Al Hadith reported. The court chaired by Judge Zubeir Mohammad Khalil also said the three men had not confessed, contrary to government statements. The acquittal was seen as a big setback for the government of Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Al Bashir which had sought severe punishment for the group accused of attempting to blow up the Zebeit Bridge in eastern Sudan in July 1992. At the time the plot was announced, the government said some 28 people, many of them senior army officers living in exile, had plotted to blow up installations, kill prominent people and topple the government last May.

Farmers attack Saudi-run project's workers

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Work on a Saudi Arabian-run tiger prawn project in northern Malaysia was suspended after farmers whose land was taken for the venture stoned workers, news reports said Monday. No injuries were reported in the incident in Kedah state. "We have lost our only source of income from it (rice) paddy farming and are frustrated with sitting idly while others exploit our land," farmers' spokesman Zakaria Ahmad was quoted as saying by Kedah's Alor Star newspaper. The 60 million ringgit ($24 million) project is a joint venture between Saudi Arabia's Binladin group, the Kedah state government and other local partners. Binladin's representative, Haydar Hasan Al Sahtout, is managing director of the joint venture, called Asmak Aquaculture Sdn Bhd. Authorities in Kedah, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad's home state, took 109 hectares of land from about 100 farmers, saying the 1960 land acquisition act permitted the seizure. The law enables the government to take land for public purposes and economic development. But lawyers for the farmers say the land was not taken for a public purpose.and that the prawn farm would benefit only the company.

Last German contingent leaves Somalia

BONN (AFP) — Germany's first troops to serve outside the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) theatre of operations completed their mission in Somalia on Monday as a final contingent of 250 men left their up-country base to head for the capital Mogadishu and take a boat to Kenya, the defence ministry here said. Deployment of the 1,400 Germans at Belet Huen since last May aroused strong criticism in Germany as being against the constitution. Criticism was further fuelled when the mission seemed to be of little use, spending June to August preparing logistics support for Indian troops who never turned up.

Two injured in Kuwait cinema blast

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A bomb exploded at a cinema north of the Kuwaiti capital on Monday, injuring two people and smashing windows, the Interior Ministry said. A spokesman for the ministry condemned the attack which took place at the entrance to a cinema in Khaitan and said an investigation was underway. Cinemas in Kuwait, as in other Islamic countries, only open at night during the dawn-to-dusk fasting month of Ramadan, which started three weeks ago.

China's last imperial survivor dies

BEIJING (R) — One of China's final links to its imperial past, Aisin Giorro Pu Jie, brother of the last Qing emperor, died Monday of prostate cancer. He was 87. Pu Jie died at Beijing's Union Hospital, where he had been under treatment for almost a year. Born in Beijing in 1907, Pu Jie grew up in the twilight years of the Qing imperial court, which maintained its stylised grandeur even as China spun out of its grasp. He was the chief playmate for his brother, China's famouis boy Emperor Henry Pu Yi, who was deposed as "son of heaven" at the age of six by the Nationalist revolution of 1911.

Arab League asks U.N. to protect Palestinian people

CAIRO (Agencies) — The Arab League called on the United Nations on Monday to set up an international force to protect Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip following the Hebron mosque massacre.

The league held emergency talks in Cairo on Friday's massacre in which a Jewish settler shot dead at least 60 Palestinians as they knelt to pray.

It said in a statement after the meeting ended early on Monday: "The Arab League council condemns the Israeli crime against unarmed Palestinian worshippers.... it is a terrorist action."

It added: "The council calls on the United Nations to find an appropriate mechanism to implement the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention by setting up an international force to protect Arab citizens in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories."

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has demanded an international U.N. force for the territories and the disarming of the 120,000 Jewish settlers who live among nearly two million Palestinians before any further negotiations with Israel on implementing their delayed self-rule accord.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has written to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin offering to send U.N. observers to the territories.

Israeli officials have rejected the idea of an international force. The U.N. Security Council has twice delayed action on Hebron because of a dispute over the wording of a resolution.

The league held the Israeli authorities responsible for the mosque slaughter, demanded it disarm the settlers and urged the Security Council to send a committee of inquiry to investigate the attack.

The Arab League also said the United States and Russia, as co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, must "take the lead in protecting the Palestinian people in the occupied territories."

They called for the Jewish state to disarm the settlers immediately and for their communities to be dismantled, in line with Security Council Resolution 465, to clear the path to peace.

The Arab League called on member states to grant aid to the families of the Hebron victims and said the massacre would be commemorated each year on its anniversary, the 15th day of Ramadan.

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said Sunday that he supported sending U.N. observers to the occupied territories.

'I don't believe in sending an intervention force but I think that observers helping to control and verify what happens could be useful," Mr. Juppe told French Television TF1.

Mr. Juppe also said it was necessary to "disarm all extremist groups who make no secret that their goal is to stop the peace process" and to query "the issue of Israeli settlements."

"To disarm the settlers is another matter, because many of these settlers are also threatened," he said.

"The Israelis must react quickly and strongly (because) the Israeli government is responsible for security," Mr. Juppe said. He also urged the Israeli authorities to "go further in the release of Palestinian prisoners."

Mr. Juppe said he was shocked at both the Hebron massacre and the bombing of a church in Lebanon in which nine people died.

"There is nothing sacred anymore in the world today. Even places of worship are becoming places of barbarity."

Libyan stand

Libyan radio said Libya may leave the Arab League to let other Arab states "welcome Israel."

"The Libyan people are seriously considering leaving the Arab League so that the Arabs can welcome their brother Israel," the radio said, quoting a message conveyed to Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid by Libyan Arab Unity Minister Jomaa Al Fezzani.

The radio also broadcast part of a telephone conversation between Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi and Dr. Abdul Meguid, in which Colonel Qadhafi complained that "Israel and the Arabs are embracing each other, but the Arabs are not talking to each other, and this does not make sense."

Dr. Abdul Meguid was heard asking Col. Qadhafi to delay any decision to pull out of the league until the two had met.

Libya has criticised other Arab states for failing to resolve the conflicts in Yemen and Somalia, and accused them of "doing nothing" for the Palestinians and the Lebanese. Tripoli also blamed them for not showing solidarity with Iraq and Libya.

Libya called for an emergency Arab summit meeting to discuss the aftermath of the Hebron massacre, Arab League officials said in Cairo Sunday.

At least two-thirds of the league's 21 members have to agree to hold an Arab summit.

8 militants, 2 policemen killed in Egypt clashes

CAIRO (AP) — Eight Muslim militants were killed in a shootout with police in southern Egypt as they tried to escape after shooting down a police officer, authorities said Monday. A policeman involved in the chase also was killed.

The incident was the third in February involving multiple deaths of suspects with few or no casualties among the policemen. Fourteen alleged militants died in the three encounters.

The latest shooting was the bloodiest episode of the year between authorities and Islamic extremists and produced the highest number of deaths among suspects in a single event in almost a year. Last March 17, 10 radicals and two policemen died and 21 people were wounded in a shootout in Assiyut, a Muslim militant centre.

Since stepping up a campaign of violence in 1992, Muslim militants have killed scores of security forces in hit-and-run attacks in southern Egypt. The latest incident marked one of the rare times that police successfully gave chase after an attack.

In the attack late Sunday night, assailants shot dead a policeman at his guard post outside a traffic police station and stole his automatic rifle. At the time, security officials in Cairo said the assailants, whose number was not known, escaped.

But on Monday officials in Cairo said police chased at least five attackers trying to get away in a car. Four were killed in an exchange of fire, a fifth as he tried to flee the stopped car. The other three — who may also have been in the getaway car — were hunted down and shot in nearby sugar-cane fields in an operation that continued until dawn, police said.

The second police victim, shot during the manhunt, died later from his wounds, officials said.

More than 300 policemen, extremists and others including three foreign tourists have been killed in two years of militant violence and police crackdowns. Thirty militants convicted of terrorist crimes have been hanged.

The U.S. State Department said Feb. 1, in its 1993 report on Egypt's human rights record, that police and extremists were "locked in a cycle of violence."

The night the report was issued, police raided an apartment in a Cairo slum and killed seven suspects. The next day, the country's top policeman, Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi, said "the initiative is in our hands" in the confrontation with militants.

He said police rules of engagement had been altered to allow them to shoot first and vowed to continue until the extremist threat is eliminated.

Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, the militant Islamic group, said in a statement that extremists' taking heavy casualties while police were not wounded proved that police were wantonly shooting to kill.

The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights has reported witness accounts of police killing captured suspects in cold blood. The government denies such charges.

Intifada revived: AN ISRAELI soldier arrests a Palestinian woman during demonstrations in Arab East Jerusalem on Monday. The demonstrators were condemning the massacre of more than 60 Palestionain worshippers at a mosque in the occcupied West Bank town of Hebron on Friday. Scenes in the occupied territories after the massacre resembled the height of the six-year-old intifada. The anti-occupation revolt declined in instensity after the signing of the Sept. 13 autonomy accord, but the massacre appears to have given it a new momentum (AFP photo)

Mosque killing affirms soundness of King's call — Prince Hassan

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday sent a message to Cardinal Francis Arinze, president of the pontifical council for inter-religious dialogue, voicing appreciation of the council's expression of solidarity with the Jordanian and Muslim people in their grief at the assassination of more than 60 worshippers at a mosque in Hebron last Friday.

"I received with the deepest appreciation your cable that expressed sympathy over the massacre of the worshippers at the hand of the enemies of life during this Holy Month of Ramadan," Prince Hassan said in the message.

"Your words that reflect faith and affection reaffirm anew the soundness of our constant endeavours towards upgrading the inter-religious dialogue for the sake of extracting the wisdom of God Almighty for the benefit of all the faithful of the three monotheistic religions," the Prince said.

"Allow me to reaffirm to you as advocaters of humanitarian love that what happened at Al Ibrahimi Mosque in occupied Hebron brings to mind His Majesty King Hussein's call to the world for the need to impose divine rule on the Holy Land and to ensure equality for those inhabiting the Holy Land," he noted.

"This can be done through adherence by all the followers of these religions to achieving that goal and those who can direct the minds of all people towards God's love and towards consecrating His holy places," Prince Hassan added.

"In this way, we can prevent the hard-hearted from imposing their own rule on the faithful, the perseverant and the believers in the one God," said Prince Hassan.

"Your kind words and sincere sympathy over the martyrs and your denunciation of the crime have only strengthened our determination and resolve to firmly cling to our rights in the defence of mankind and in protecting all the shrines in the face of the treachery of infidels," Prince Hassan said.

"Let us pray to God that the tragedy at the mosque in Hebron would prompt us to increase our cooperation to bring about a total end to all kinds of killing so that we can invigorate humanity and just and honorable peace both at the Western and the Eastern ends of the Mediterranean Sea so that this sea would once again emerge as God had destined it to be, a symbol of goodness, and so that man's civilisation in the crade of religions can regain its magnanimity, goodness and life," the Crown Prince said.

Following is the text of the cable sent to the Crown Prince by Cardinal Arinze:

"I want to express our solidarity with you and your fellow Muslims in your grief at this time as you mourn the deaths in Hebron of your fellow believers. Our hearts are heavy to see your holy season of Ramadan desecrated by these terrible murders. The crime is compounded by the profanation of the tomb of Abraham, a man of faith and peace, 'the friend of God,' who is a model for all those who desire to live according to the will of God.

"Concerning those who have died, we have a word of hope. Taken by death at the time of prayer, we can with confidence implore God's infinite mercy. For it is to God that they return.

"We the living, while we mourn the lives of the victims and cry out anew for justice, know that the peace and brotherhood we seek are, at the same time, gifts from God and the fruits of our own human labours. We beg that those who follow paths of hatred and oppression may be converted to God, who is both merciful and just."

Israel offers larger Palestinian police force

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel is ready to agree to greater numbers of Palestinian police to maintain order in the occupied territories following the Hebron mosque massacre, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Monday.

"If the Palestinians demand a bigger police force, it will be a legitimate and logical demand," Mr. peres told reporters.

"We are prepared to discuss any reasonable and logical request because Israelis and Palestinians have no better choice other than to resume the (peace) negotiations as soon as possible," Mr. Peres said.

"During autonomy negotiations in Egypt, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) had called for a 10,000-strong force while Israel wanted only 6,000, until Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin spoke of 8,500 as a compromise.

That was before a Jewish settler massacred at least 60 Palestinians praying in a Hebron mosque on Friday, sparking protests in which another 15 Arabs have died and bringing the peace talks to a halt.

'Expulsion of settlers'

Two Israeli ministers called Monday for 500 Jewish settlers living in the centre of Hebron to be expelled.

Tourism Minister Uzi Baram told Israeli radio that the Labour Party had made a mistake in allowing the Kyriat Arba settlement to be built on the edge of the town.

And "this became a crime when the right decided to plant settlers in the heart of Hebron."

His views were echoed by Housing Minister Benyamin Ben Eliezer, a fellow member of the ruling Labour Party.

Russia expels U.S. diplomat

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia expelled a U.S. diplomat Monday in retaliation for Washington's expulsion last week of a Russian intelligence officer accused of involvement in the Ames spy scandal.

The order for James L. Morris, a counsellor at the U.S. embassy in Moscow, to leave the country within seven days was reminiscent of the cold war and threatened to chill U.S.-Russian relations, at least for a while.

"We have received a request from the Russian government to withdraw a senior official of the embassy. We expressed our great regret and concern over this action," the U.S. embassy said in a statement that did not mention Mr. Morris by name.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said Mr. Morris was a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officer and was expelled in retaliation for "the unjust actions of the American side."

The United States had expected the expulsion of an American from Moscow since Alexander Lysenko, the chief of Russia's intelligence station in Washington, was declared persona non-grata last Friday and ordered to leave the United States within a week.

U.S. officials said Mr. Lysenko "was in a position to be responsible" for CIA officer Aldrich H. Ames and his wife, Rosario, who were charged last week with spying for Moscow since 1985.

But Russian officials objected to the expulsion of Mr. Lysenko, the first KGB "rezident," or station chief, to be officially introduced in Washington as an intelligence officer.

"Even if we assume that Ames really worked for us, what has this to do with Lysenko, who arrived in the United States last summer?" said Yuri Kobaladze, spokesman for the Foreign Intelligence Service, one of the successor organisations to the Soviet KGB.

The reciprocal expulsions were the first between Moscow and Washington since the bugging of the U.S. embassy in the mid-1980s.

In Washington, an administration official suggested that any tit-for-tat gamesmanship between the two countries may be over for now.

"We have no further plans at this time to take further action," the offical said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"There's a larger point here — that is no matter how serious the case is, we believe the continued relations with Russia is in our best interest," the offiical said.

Mr. Ames, who once headed the CIA branch in charge of Soviet counter-intelligence, allegedly sold secrets to the Soviet Union and later Russia for more than $1.5 million. U.S. officials believe the information he gave Moscow may have led to the execution of as many as 10 Russians who were spying for the United States.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has not commented publicly on the spy scandal.

"The president does not get mixed up in spying," his spokesman, Anatoly Krasikov, told the Associated Press.

Alexander Konovalov, an independent military analyst at Moscow's Institute of the USA and Canada, noted that Mr. Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev have been accused by ultranationalists of kowtowing to the West.

COLUMN

Man arrested for threatening Clinton's life

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Authorities arrested a man in Florida Friday who reportedly threatened to kill President Bill Clinton during his daily morning jog around the Washington monuments. Ronald Barbour, 39, was being held in a Florida jail after an indictment was issued Thursday saying he had "knowingly and willfully threatened to take the life of, and to inflict bodily harm upon, the president of the United States." Washington television Station WUSA-TV reported that the unempioyed limousine driver was in Washington from Jan. 11 to Jan. 17 and had planned to shoot Mr. Clinton during his routine run on the mall. Mr. Clinton was in Europe during that period. The television station also said that a handgun had been recovered in Florida and that Mr. Barbour would be psychologically tested. The Secret Service would not comment on the case but the White House confirmed that an arrest had been made.

Menchu recovers after surgery

MEXICO CITY (R) — Nobel peace laureate Rigoberta Menchu Tum was recovering well after a three-hour operation in a Mexico City hospital, the state news agency Notimex said. It gave few details about Friday's surgery for a Gynecological ailment except to say there had been no complications. Ms. Menchu, 36, a Guatemalan Mayan Indian who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 after losing much of her family during Guatemala's civil war, will spend another day or so in the hospital, said Notimex, quoting Ms. Menchu spokesman Hugo Benitez. Mr. Benitez was quoted as saying Ms. Menchu was well although still in some pain and that she was planning to spend a month afterwards recuperating at her home in Mexico City.

Angry vendors block access to Mexican ruins

MEXICO CITY (R) — Some 200 vendors were blocking access to the majestic ruins of Teotihuacan on the outskirts of Mexico City to protest new rules barring them from the ancient site, the state news agency Notimex said Sunday. The vendors have closed off all five entrances to Teotihuacan since Thursday, preventing visitors and archaeological workers from entering, Notimex said. Teotihuacan, believed to have been built around 200 A.D., is best known for its tiered Pyramids of the Sun and Moon. The city, which was destroyed by fire five centuries before the rise of the Aztecs, was named Teotihuacan or "city of the gods" by Aztecs who marvelled at its grand monuments. Under a plan aimed at exploring more of the eight-and-a-half-square-mile (22-square-km) site, Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History ordered the removal of the vendors, who make a living peddling clay and obsidian replicas of ancient artifacts to tourists. More than 1 million tourists visit Teotihuacan each year.

12-year-old accused of killing cousin

CINCINNATI (AP) — A 12-year-old girl turned herself in for the death a decade ago of a 13-month-old cousin and has been charged with murder so she can get help, police said. "This was just a mechanism to get her into the system," Police Sgt. Bob Disbennett said Sunday. "We don't anticipate her going to jail." "They're not here to crucify a 12-year-old who committed a crime when she was 3," he said. "This is a situation where they try to get this girl the help she needs." The girl admitted to the crime Friday and turned herself in Saturday to face the murder charge, placed under a category of juvenile delinquency. The girl, whose name was not released, was 3 years old at the time of Lamar Howell's death. Police and the Hamilton County Coroner originally had determined that the boy accidentally drowned in a bucket of bleach and water on July 22, 1984, while playing with his cousin.

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